



A TRANSLATION AND EXPOSITION

OF

THE PSALMS ;

GROUNDING ON THE PRINCIPLES ADOPTED IN THE POSTHUMOUS
WORK OF THE LATE BISHOP HORSLEY, VIZ.

That these Sacred Oracles

HAVE FOR THE MOST PART AN IMMEDIATE REFERENCE TO
CHRIST, AND TO THE EVENTS OF HIS FIRST
AND SECOND ADVENT.

BY THE

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" And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was
yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses,
in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." Luke xxiv. 41.

" Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him,
shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." Hebrews ix. 28.

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PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

SINCE it has pleased God to prolong my days, to meet the call for a fresh edition of my work on the Psalms, I cannot withhold my testimony that the experience of twenty years has much strengthened my convictions of the truth of those general principles of interpretation, on which the work was undertaken. Some things I have seen it right to revise in individual passages, and have made some alterations in seeking an equivalent in our language for the rendering of the Hebrew tenses, for though a great recent authority would have confirmed in one point what stood in the former edition, where a present time has been ascribed to what has been more generally esteemed as a future tense, I now doubt the correctness of this hypothesis, as to the value of the tense in itself.

Another alteration I have thought proper to make is the retaining the original mysterious names of Deity—Jehovah, Elohim, Sabaoth, El, and Jah.^a But the general

^a I have thought it expedient in most of the passages of Scripture quoted in this work, to retain the original names applied to the Deity in the sacred volume, conceiving this practice to be always useful, and, on many occasions, of the highest importance.

These names are, principally, five in number, EL, SHADAI, SABAOTH, ELOHIM or ELOAH, JEHOVAH or JAH.

For my notions respecting the derivations and meanings of these Divine names, I beg leave to refer to a publication on the book of Job, Part I, Sect. 1, and will here only briefly recapitulate what I believe to be the chief idea, respectively denoted in these names of Deity.

1. EL, the OMNIPRESENT, “under the notion of proximity”—“coming close up to every thing.” Acts xvii. 27, 28, may therefore be conveniently quoted to express its meaning, where St. Paul declares to the Athenians, “The unknown God,” as “not far from every one of us:” “for in him we live, and move, and have our being.”

2. SHADAI or SHADAI, the ALMIGHTY,—particularly in this view—“the SUPPLIER OF ALL SUFFICIENCY TO HIS CREATURES.” St. Paul’s words may serve for an explanation: “not that we are sufficient of ourselves, our sufficiency is of God:” “my God will supply your need:” “God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye always having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work.”

3. SABAOTH (Lord of Hosts) I regard as one of the divine names; it implies, literally, “the WARRIOR, by way of eminence”—“the mightiest of all who engage in the array of battle.” The full manifestation of God in this name, will be, when in “the great day of the battle of Almighty God,” one appears with the armies of heaven, as the Avenger and Redeemer, “Who in righteousness doth judge and make war.”

4. ELOHIM or ELOAH, has given occasion to much disquisition. I would briefly sum up its *pregnant* meaning. The object or objects of any man’s religious trust and worship is, or are, HIS Elohim; but

principle of interpretation as stated in the Preface to the first edition will be found the same, and I cannot but indulge the thought that the application of certain parts

to us there is but one Elohim,—the Elohim of Revelation,—manifested to those who are taught by him, not “as one only person, but as three persons—Father, Son, and Spirit;” yet still one undivided Deity—manifested to those whom he acknowledges as “his people,” or “his children,” in a covenanted relation, as shown in the dispensation or economy of the Christ: which dispensation was from the beginning ordained, and ordered in all things, foreshewn in mystic rites of sacrifice and purification: its gracious benefits moreover were often pledged, and promised, and even confirmed by solemn oaths,—whence many derive the term Elohim, as though he were “a sworn God” to the heirs of promise—all that believe in his name. But this covenant, long the hope of the church, was only actually made, “put in force,” and carried into execution over the dead body of the crucified Saviour, when God “raised again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant,” and gave him to be “THE AUTHOR OF ETERNAL LIFE TO THEM THAT OBEY HIM”—“God in Christ”—“both God and man,” anointed by the Holy Ghost—“reconciling the world to himself.”

5. For the term JEHOVAH or JAH, that I may not too much lengthen this note, I refer as above to the translation and exposition of the book of Job. Jehovah is the only application which is used to form a proper name of the Deity. It denotes, indeed, his self-existent, and eternal, unchangeable essence—the Being of all Being; but this, I think, is not all: it denotes, further, the essential Godhead as, in its second person, it takes a visible form, and comes into its own creation as personally the image of the invisible Deity, one person of that invisible Deity sustaining the birth of a creature, “born in the world,” “come in the flesh:” as was ordained in everlasting covenant, “taking the manhood into God,” making that manhood at first, for our sakes, the seat of his great humiliation, then in it being glorified with the glories as of the only begotten Son of the Father, exalted to the right hand of power and majesty on high, “seen of angels,” and

of the Psalms to our Lord as coming in his glory to his personal reign and the literal restoration of the outcast Israel, to be the head of the nations in a redeemed world to come, will not now be received with that dislike and almost disgust in certain quarters as was the case on the first appearance of this work. The prophecies of scripture have been more studied, and notwithstanding the varieties of interpretations, "knowledge has increased," and truly, in every application of the divine oracle, the whole world at this present day presents the scene of "many running to and fro."

Among the signs of these present times, also, not the least remarkable is the sudden arresting of the attention of the nations of the earth to the condition of the dispersed Jews—to the present state of their "land of promise," and of their Holy City.

How little conjectured would it have been twenty

at the day appointed for "the revelation of the Son of man" to come again in the same glorified body; not only—as by virtue of his offices—"Jehovah's Christ," "King of glory," and "Lord of all," but as the only and eternal manifestor of "the fulness of Godhead" to all created beings,—IMMANUEL—"God with us."

I am satisfied that the ineffable name Jehovah was meant to be translated in the Revelation, "who is, and was, and is to come." But, observe, it is not "He who is, and was, and is to be," but "is to come." And if JAH is any thing else than an abbreviation of Jehovah generally, (which I think in most cases it is) it denotes, "HE THAT IS TO COME," or "HE THAT SHOULD COME."

years ago, that Jerusalem in her desolate state would be of consequence enough in the eyes of our own country, to call for a resident Bishop of the Church of England. What will come of this, no mortal can point out: whether the first raging wave of the tumultuous nations may wash it all away and it be seen no more, or whether in the secret purposes of the God of Israel, there may hereafter appear a connection between this event, (or, at least the state of things which gave occasion to this measure,) and His final dispensations of mercy “unto his land and to his people.”^b The terms have been heard—Church of the Circumcision—Bishop of the Circumcision! But surely these are misnomers here, since “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature;” and however the example of antiquity may be pleaded, yet, at all events, we should keep distinctly in view that the remnant both of the Jews and Gentiles, who now by grace obey the gospel call, are made the citizens of a more excellent city than restored Jerusalem, though she become “the joy of the whole earth,” and are bound to seek a better country than Canaan, though that country be renewed “like the garden of Eden,” and

^b Deuteronomy xxxii. 43.

become “the glory of all lands.” The christian believer, if he be truly such, has the expectation of inheriting a kingdom that “flesh and blood cannot inherit,” to enter as a child of the resurrection into the joy and glory of his Lord, to sit with him upon his throne, and in some sort be partaker with him both in his regal and sacerdotal character. His baptism and his communion in the body and blood of Christ, are tokens and symbols of a greater change and more exalted state of existence than will be effected when God, as he has promised, shall circumcise in heart and flesh the surviving remnants of Israel, and they become the “blessed of the Lord, which made Heaven and Earth,” both they and their children.

A matter of far less importance indeed and hardly worthy of mention here, yet, connected as I think with the honour and beneficial effect of these sacred Psalms, I rejoice to have lived to witness—I mean the extensive revival in our Churches of their appropriate music.^c

^c A late eminent writer has very justly observed, “Singing is as much the proper use of a Psalm, as devout supplication is the proper use of a form of prayer; and a psalm only read is very much like a prayer only read. Now the method of chaunting a psalm such as is used in the colleges of the universities, and in some churches, is such as all persons are capable of; the change of voice in thus chaunting a

psalm is so small and natural, that every body is able to do it, and yet sufficient to raise and keep up the gladness of our hearts. You are therefore to consider this chaunting of a psalm, as something that is to awaken all that is good and holy within you; that is to call your spirits to their proper duty, and to set you in the best posture towards heaven, and tune all the powers of your souls to worship and adoration; for there is nothing that so clears the way of our prayers—nothing that so disperses the dulness of heart—nothing that so purifies the soul from poor and little passions—nothing that so opens heaven or carries your heart so near it, as these songs of praise: they create a sense of delight in God; they awaken holy desires; they teach you how to ask; they kindle an holy flame; they turn your heart into an altar, and your prayers into incense, and they carry them as a sweet savour to the throne of grace. The difference between reading and singing a psalm will be easily understood, if you consider the difference between reading and singing a common song that you like. While you read it you only like it, and that is all; but as soon as you sing it then you enjoy it, you feel the delight of it; it has got hold of you, your passions keep pace with it, and you feel the same spirit within you as there seems to be in the words.—*Law's Serious Call, Chapter XV.*

INTRODUCTION.

AFTER so much has been written on the Psalms, it is hardly to be expected that the present work will appear under very favourable impressions as to its necessity or utility. If it seem to pretend something new, the danger of novelties in the interpreting of Scripture will be strongly urged; if it profess but to follow the beaten track, the presumption of expecting to supersede so many eminent writers on the same subject, will not be slightly blamed.

With respect to novelties in the interpretation of Scripture, I am almost ready to say, if really such, they must needs be wrong;—except so far as time and its events shall disclose in the prophecies of Scripture things not known before: in these we are permitted to expect, as the end draws near, that “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased:” and, perhaps, it is not fully understood how large a portion of the ancient Jewish Scriptures will be affected by this, if we may so call it, growing interpretation.

I would by no means appear as depreciating others—that were but a poor pledge of superior success, and savours least of all of “that Wisdom that is from above,” on whose teaching all depends. I am happy, however, in some of the

more perilous departures from opinions now received, to be able to adduce ancient authorities, and to claim, for the general principle of the following Exposition, the sanction of an eminent Prelate, who stands at the head of modern commentators on the Sacred Volume.^a

The principles upon which the present Exposition of the Psalms is founded, and by which, of course, the Translation has been considerably influenced, are briefly these :

I. That these sacred songs are not to be applied to the character and personal concerns of David, or to the events of his times, but are to be understood in immediate reference to the Lord Messiah—to his meritorious obedience, his sufferings, his personal conflicts, or his conflicts in his mystical body—to the daring efforts, the partial success, and final destruction of his enemies—and especially to the triumphant establishment of his glorious kingdom in the last days. In thus elevating the subjects of the Psalms, we discard, of course, the conceits of the Jewish editors, when they tell us that one Psalm is “concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite;” that another was written “when David changed his behaviour before Abimelech;” that these describe his injuries from Saul, and those his affliction when he fled out of the land for Absalom: far nobler themes are here supposed to have employed the harp of the inspired son of Jesse—themes more suitable to the destined use of these sacred songs in the public worship of the church of God in all subsequent ages, and more consonant with what every one acknowledges to be the subjects of some of these divine odes, in typical allusion, at least, if not immediately.

II. The Psalms being for the most part of a prophetical character, this circumstance subjects them to a particular

^a Bishop Horsley. See his posthumous publication on the Psalms.

mode of interpretation; according to that most important rule given us by the Apostle Peter for the explanation of the prophecies: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation; for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."^b

Bishop Horsley has so ably illustrated this important canon of sacred criticism in the second volume of his Sermons, that I cannot forbear a short quotation: "This maxim is to be applied both to every single text of prophecy and to the whole. Of every single text of prophecy, it is true that it cannot be its OWN INTERPRETER; for this reason, because the Scripture prophecies are not detached predictions of separate, independent events, but are united in a regular and entire system, all terminating in one great object—the promulgation of the Gospel, and the complete establishment of Messiah's kingdom. Of this system, every particular prophecy makes a part, and bears a more immediate or a more remote relation to that which is the object of the whole. It is, therefore, very unlikely that the true signification of any particular text of prophecy should be discovered from the bare attention to the terms of the single prediction taken by itself, without considering it as part of that system to which it unquestionably belongs, and without considering how it may stand connected with earlier and later prophecies, especially with those which more immediately precede or more immediately follow."

"Again: of the whole of Scripture prophecies it is true that it cannot be ITS OWN INTERPRETER: its meaning cannot be discovered without a general knowledge of the principal events to which it alludes."—"Every particular prophecy is to be referred to the system, and to be under-

^b 2 Peter i. 20, 21.

stood in that sense which may most aptly connect it with the whole; and the sense of prophecy is to be sought in the events which have actually taken place; the history of mankind, especially in the article of their religious improvement, being the public, infallible interpreter of the oracles of God."

Such are the principles upon which the following Translation and Exposition have been constructed. A reference to Christ and his kingdom, for the most part without the intervention of type or similitude, has been considered as the design of the divine author of the Psalms; and being in general understood as prophetical, they have been interpreted according to the apostolic canon for the exposition of prophecy explained above.

That such are the nature and design of these sacred songs, I am aware cannot be satisfactorily proved by the consideration of some particular Psalms, unconnected with the rest. It is from a general survey of the whole, and the light that one Psalm throws upon another, when they are regarded as a connected series, that my own mind has been led to the conviction of the correctness of this mode of interpretation. But I especially call upon the reader to remark the manner in which passages from the Psalms are quoted in the New Testament, and applied to Christ and the concerns of his kingdom. This, to me, appears to be the proper clue for unravelling the mysteries of these oracles. If Christ is the virtuous sufferer, the triumphant king in this and that Psalm, and the conflict described is referred by the Spirit of God himself to the mortal or spiritual foes of the Messiah; why, in other Psalms, where a similar language is used, are we to look for an explanation of the mighty contest, only in application to the trivial concerns of David and his followers?

With these views of the book of Psalms, a proper introduction to its exposition will be a short recollection of the principal prophecies which had, previously to the time of the Psalmist, "made known" to the church the "power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

At the head of these sacred oracles must stand, of course, that which first intimated a design of mercy to the fallen progenitors of the human race. The doom pronounced upon their seducer, predicted that his dominion over mankind should not remain undisturbed; and that at length his usurped power should be overthrown by one born of woman: "I WILL PUT ENMITY^c BETWEEN THEE AND THE WOMAN, AND BETWEEN THY SEED AND HER SEED: IT (OR, HE) SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD, AND THOU SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL."

By "the woman" in this prophecy we are not to understand Eve personally, but Eve mystically—Eve, as the name^d she received on this occasion implies, "the mother of all that should live:" not, indeed, as the mother of all mankind—that, the event has shown to be no true prophecy. In the great mass of mankind there has appeared no hostility against the prince of darkness, excited by the influence of God: but it has been found true with respect to a peculiar people, whom God, of his special grace, has spiritually quickened and separated to himself from the midst of mankind: and much has this people suffered from this hostility, in the warfare which they have provoked by their avowed renunciation of the devil, and of the world that lieth in wickedness. The event, the true interpreter of prophecy, has thus shown that these, and not all her natural descendants, are ALL THE LIVING of whom Eve is the symbol

^c אִיבָה hostility, the design of injury, which constitutes a state of enmity or warfare.

^d חַוָּה—Ζωη.

in this prophecy. "Cain," her first-born, "was of that evil one," and began the hostility in the murder of his brother; and the succeeding history of mankind has every where discovered that those who are "born after the flesh" into the church and family of God, but are not "born after the Spirit," do uniformly side with the adversary, and take part with him and his seed in persecuting the just.

In the family of "all the living," represented by Eve in this prophecy, A SEED was to be raised up, ("He says not, of seeds, as of many, &c.;") who, after some injury received in the conflict, should bring this warfare to a decisive issue, and "bruise the serpent's head:" here, too, the event is the explanation—"he who is to destroy the works of the devil," has already been manifested, "made of a woman," born in the church of God. Where he was vulnerable, he was bruised in his conflict with the powers of darkness; but he arose victorious, and was "caught up to God and to his throne," where he is seated "at the right hand of the Majesty on high, from henceforth expecting till his enemies are to be made his footstool." To his church, still militant here on earth, he has left a promise for the accomplishment of which we are yet waiting. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly;" and this consummation will be found the great burden of prophecy.

The next prediction, in order of time, with which we are acquainted, is one preserved in the Epistle of St. Jude; "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, BEHOLD, THE LORD COMETH WITH TEN THOUSANDS OF HIS SAINTS, (or rather, "WITH HIS HOLY MYRIADS,"^d) TO EXECUTE JUDGMENT UPON ALL, AND TO CON-VICT ALL THAT ARE UNGODLY AMONG MEN, OF ALL THEIR UNGODLY DEEDS, WHICH THEY HAVE UNGODLY COMMITTED;

^d *Ἐν μυριάσιν ἁγίαις αὐτοῦ.*

AND ALL THEIR HARD SPEECHES WHICH UNGODLY SINNERS HAVE SPOKEN AGAINST HIM." St. Jude tells us, that in this prediction Enoch prophesied respecting the adversaries of the last days:—not respecting any intermediate visitation of divine judgment, nor respecting the universal deluge; but that the Spirit taught him to foresee the parties engaged in the last conflict that should take place among men, and which was to be terminated only by the actual appearing of "the Lord" with the "saints of the Most High."

This will be found characteristic of the method of Scripture prophecy in general: whatever be the immediate occasion of the heavenly vision, however it may glance as it passes on various events to happen in the history of the church, or may take its stand to point out the afflictive scenes of the Redeemer's sufferings, and describe his character in the days of his flesh; yet, it usually leads the prophet to fix his gaze on the last grand catastrophe, when the sceptre of the wicked is broken for ever, and the righteous King is manifested in all the glories of his heavenly kingdom. And here we see the complete fulfilment of the symbol of the former oracle, the bruising of the serpent's head. The woman's seed, when manifested as conqueror and judge, comes as "the Lord from heaven:" and who these "holy myriads" are that compose his train, we shall have many future opportunities to inquire.*

I refer to the book of Job for the next recorded prophecy of the Messiah: if it is true (which I much question^f) that Job was a little posterior to Abraham, he was evidently unconnected with him, and with that new religious era which commenced with the call of this Patriarch. We may, therefore, with propriety, class Job with the

* Compare 1 Thess. iv. 13, &c. and Rev. xix.

^f See Dr. Hale's Chronology.

Patriarchs of the former ages; and his well-known confession may be ranked among the most remarkable prophecies extant of the ancient world: for though not strictly speaking a prophecy, it expresses a confidence in a future event, which nothing but the Spirit of prophecy could have inspired: "I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH, AND THAT IN THE LATTER DAY HE SHALL STAND UPON THE EARTH; AND THOUGH, AFTER MY SKIN, WORMS DESTROY THIS BODY, YET IN MY FLESH SHALL I SEE GOD, WHOM I SHALL SEE FOR MYSELF, AND MINE EYES SHALL BEHOLD, AND NOT ANOTHER; THOUGH MY REINS BE CONSUMED WITHIN ME."

I am aware of the different turns which may be given to the very ancient language of this prediction; but I am satisfied that our public translation leaves a true general impression on the mind of the reader. He should, however, bear in mind the proper meaning of the term we render Redeemer^g—that nearest kinsman in blood, who, according to the customs of society in ancient times, was charged with the vindication of the rights of an injured relative, and was bound in honour to avenge his wrongs: such a kinsman's part the afflicted, the deserted, dying Job claims in Him that was to come. With **HIS** appearing in the latter days, he connects his confident expectation of a resurrection: for the expressions in the original, quoted below^h, whichever way rendered, certainly amount to this: and the words which followⁱ, should be understood to signify, I shall see God of my flesh; i. e. as my kinsman, partaker of flesh and blood with me, as the children of the same father are: as it follows, "I shall see him mine, and not as a stranger." Every eye must behold the woman's seed when he appears at the last day: his adversaries, the revilers of his people, as is

^g נִלְוֶה

וְאַחֲרַי עֹרֵי נֶקֶפֶן זֹאת ^h
ⁱ וּמִבְשָׂרִי אֶחָזֶה אֱלֹהִים

intimated in the nineteenth verse, must behold him, and wait the approach of his avenging sword ; but Job, as one of the family of the mystic Eve, expected to see him as “ his own,” his elder relative, his redeeming kinsman.

We arrive now at the epocha of the call of Abraham, when it pleased God to renew the ancient promises, with a further specification that the promised seed should descend from his loins, through his son Isaac, as was afterwards revealed, and at a still later period through his grandson Jacob.

The limits of an introduction will not allow me to consider all the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob : they contain much that relates to the temporal situation of their descendants, destined for many ages to form the external church of God upon earth, and in all dispensations of mercy to have a priority, as a nation, in those privileges which were afterwards to be universally extended “ to all the families of the earth.”

Much has been written on this subject, and some have raised a doubt how far these patriarchs rested their faith on a future Saviour ; but we have Christ’s own word that “ Abraham saw his day ;” and, as we know nothing to the contrary, we ought to suppose the fathers understood the promises made to them, in the sense in which the Holy Ghost intended them. What was that sense, he has himself condescended to inform us : “ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, unto seeds, as of many, but as of one, *And to thy seed*, which is Christ.”^k He was “ the seed to whom the promise was made.”^l This “ promise to Abraham and to his seed was, that HE should be the heir of the world :”^m that is, as many

^k Gal. iii. 16.

^l Ver. 19.

^m Rom. iv. 13.

scriptures have explained, the promised seed is to be Lord and Possessor of the whole world, and is to inherit all things. Abraham, "as the father of the faithful," in all this transaction is symbolically the same as the mystic Eve, "the mother of all living;" the representative of true believers, who, quickened by the Spirit of life, and redeemed by the promised seed, are to be joint heirs with him of the world to come, and to "inherit a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world." All the blessings of the Gospel, the privileges of the kingdom as now subsisting, "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," are no doubt included in these promises to Abraham and to those "who are blessed with faithful Abraham." The promise and oath of God to Abraham, we are expressly told by the Apostle, were designed to "show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel"—"that we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." But these are only preparatory privileges, an earnest of fuller blessings to come; they but begin to "make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory"—"the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

I shall only remark further of the oracles delivered to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that in the dying benediction of the last of these fathers of the Hebrew race, we discover that, of his twelve sons, Judah is the chosen progenitor of the Messiah according to the flesh :

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff^a from between his feet,

^a מִדְּבָרָא "a ruler's staff, or wand." Compare Numb. xxi. 18. רִגְלֵיךָ may refer to the manner in which the staff or wand of office was held. If the

Until SHILOH come :

And to him shall be the gathering^o of the people.

The period of the ministry and legislation of Moses will next claim our attention : but here, again, we may not enter into detail ; since we are sufficiently aware that the whole structure of the Jewish polity had reference to the coming of the Messiah and to our redemption through him. The covenant on the condition of works, deeply impresses the necessity of other terms of mercy for them that shall be saved—a lesson the proud heart of man is very slow to learn : and all the figurative rites of the ceremonial law are designed to adumbrate the remission of sins in the blood of Christ, and the purifying of his people in him, their Sanctifier, through the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, while he executes his priestly office “in the true tabernacle which God hath pitched, and not man.”

The Children of Israel, so far as they observed the institutions of Moses, and believed his writings, were a people made ready for the Lord. Jesus was that “prophet” to be “raised up from among his brethren”—“like unto Moses.” We see his symbol in the star and sceptre of Balaam ; and the learned Prelate, to whom I so often refer, has attempted with great ingenuity to point out some other predictions of an universal Saviour in the Pentateuch. I shall only lead the reader to remark, that “in the blessing of Moses, the man of God, wherewith he blesses the children of Israel

Samaritan reading be preferred, it may be rendered “among his ensigns, or insignia.” The most satisfactory explanation of שִׁילֹה is that of Simon : he derives it from שָׁלַח SHILOH will then signify HER OFFSPRING, “*Proles sive filius ejus.*” We may therefore well compare it with the WOMAN’S SEED of the primeval promise, and with the יִלְדָּה יִלְדָּה of the Prophet Micah, ch. v. ver. 2. But vide Professor Lee.

^o Or the subjection of the nations.

before his death," and foretells the future destinies of their several tribes, Judah's blessing relates solely to his Shiloh.

Hear, O Jehovah, the voice of Judah,
And bring HIM unto his people :
His hand shall contend for them,
And shall be their help against their enemies.

In the blessing of Naphtali, though it has generally passed unnoticed, we have a remarkable delineation of the earthly abode of our divine Master, in the earlier stages of his temporal life and ministry.

And of Naphtali he said,
O Naphtali ! filled with favour ;
Ay, replete with the blessings of Jehovah
Are the sea and the south of his inheritance.

An inspection of the map of Canaan will explain this blessing. The southern part of the allotment of the tribe of Naphtali was a narrow strip of land, running along the western shores of the sea of Genesareth, often mentioned in the history of the Evangelists : here was situated Bethsaida, a city, where "many of the mighty works" of Jesus "were done," and Capernaum "exalted to heaven" by the personal residence of the incarnate Deity.

But we hasten to the era of the Psalmist. We have the authority of the Apostle to instruct us that the Promised Seed, of whom it was previously known that he should "spring from Judah," was now predicted to be born in the royal family of David ; and David's throne becomes, in the language of prophecy, symbolical of the regal state of the Messiah ; and the covenant of redemption receives a new designation, "The sure mercies of David."—"There-

fore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne," &c. This may prepare us to expect "many things in the Psalms concerning him;" but there are two passages, which may well arrest our attention, before we proceed to consider these sacred songs: the one will be found in the promise made to David concerning a son to sit on his throne, recorded in 2 Sam. vii. and in 1 Chron. xvii.; the other in what are called the last words of David, 2 Sam. xxiii.

The former passage has been much lowered by referring it literally to Solomon, and admitting only a very faint and distant allusion to the Messiah. Dr. Kennicott has better instructed us that it belongs not to Solomon, but is to be understood primarily of Christ. Ver. 12. "AND WHEN THY DAYS ARE FULFILLED, AND THOU SHALT SLEEP WITH THY FATHERS, I WILL SET UP THY SEED AFTER THEE, WHICH SHALL PROCEED OUT OF THY BOWELS; AND I WILL ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM: HE SHALL BUILD AN HOUSE FOR MY NAME, AND I WILL ESTABLISH THE THRONE OF HIS KINGDOM FOR EVER. I WILL BE HIS FATHER, AND HE SHALL BE MY SON. IF HE COMMIT INIQUITY," or, according to Dr. Kennicott, "IN HIS SUFFERING FOR INIQUITY,"^p I WILL CHASTEN HIM WITH THE ROD OF MEN, BUT MY MERCY," or rather "KINDNESS," or "TENDER LOVE SHALL NOT DEPART FROM HIM, AS I TOOK IT FROM SAUL, WHOM I PUT AWAY BEFORE THEE. AND THINE HOUSE" (ver. 16); or, adopting the parallel place in Chronicles, the readings of which are favoured by the Septuagint and Syriac versions in this place: "BUT I WILL SETTLE HIM IN MINE HOUSE,

^p Or, perhaps, we may illustrate from Psalm lxxxix.: "IF HE—the members of his mystical body," &c.

AND IN MY KINGDOM FOR EVER, AND HIS THRONE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED FOR EVERMORE."

The above-mentioned writer has justly argued that the language of the 12th verse points to something to take place after the death of David, which does not so well agree with the circumstances of Solomon's exaltation: but, certainly, the eternal kingdom, and the eternal settlement in the house of God, could not apply to Solomon: this could only be meant of the reign of Messiah, and of the spiritual house which he is so frequently represented in the Scripture as building and presiding over. Besides, the 14th verse is quoted immediately of Christ by the Apostle, Heb. i. Dr Kennicott's remarks on the 19th verse are so very important, I gladly avail myself of his labours and superior authority: "And this is," or must be, "the law of the man," or "of the Adam;"^a that is, this promise must relate to the law or ordinance made by God to Adam, concerning the WOMAN'S SEED—the man, or the second Adam, as the Messiah is expressly called by St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. This meaning will be yet more evident from the parallel place, 1 Chron. xvii. 17, where the words of David are now most miserably rendered thus: "And thou hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree:" whereas, the words^r signify, "And thou hast regarded me according to the order of the Adam that is future," or, "the man that is from above," (for the word^a very remarkably signifies *hereafter* as to time, and *from above* as to place): and thus St. Paul, including both senses, "The second man is the Lord from heaven;" and "Adam the figure of him that was to come," or, "the future." Rom. v. 14.^t

^a וזאת תורת האדם
המעלה

^r וראיתני כחור האדם המעלה
^t Kennicott's Remains.

I proceed to the last passage I have to quote, which I will thus venture to state from the original :

2 SAMUEL, XXIII.

And these be the last words of David :

David, the son of Jesse, spake,
Even the man that was raised up spake^a

Concerning the Messiah of the Elohim of Jacob,
Even the delightful 'theme' of the psalms of Israel.^a

The Spirit of Jehovah spake in me,
And his word was upon my tongue :

The Elohim of Israel spake ;
To me the Rock of Israel said :

'There shall' rule a JUST ONE over man,^y
'He shall' rule in the fear of Elohim :

And he shall be as the morning light at the rising of the sun,
A morning that dawneth without clouds ;

For he shall not flourish^z
As the grass of the earth after the rains.

^a The style here is exactly similar to the opening of the prophecy of Balaam. (Numbers, xxiv.) The word we render "spake," דָּבַר, means more, hath spoken oracularly. The son of Jesse, when he spake, delivered an oracle of God. The God of Israel himself spake in him, and delivered to him the predictions concerning the Messiah.

^z Or rather, "choral songs."

^y Dathe, with many others, applies this to the Messiah, justly observing that Solomon could not be said to reign over mankind, or the whole human race, as the word דָּבַר signifies.

^z I have ventured to transpose כִּי לֹא יִצְמַח from the 6th verse, where its connection has never been fairly made out. Compare the Septuagint and Syriac. His prosperity shall not be uncertain, fluctuating, and of short duration, like the grass that depends on the coming and continuance of the rain ; but his rise and increase shall be certain and progressive, like the morning light, unobscured by clouds, shining more and more to the perfect day.

Truly not so is my house with El,
Because he hath made with me an everlasting covenant :

It is ordered in all things and sure,
And it is all my safety and all my desire.

But 'the sons of' Belial,
They are like the straggling thorn ;

When they cannot be taken by the hand,
And a man cannot touch them,

He will heap them together with the iron and the staff of a spear,
And with fire will he consume them when he hath done.

This beautiful poem might stand as a table of contents to the book of Psalms. Their "delightful theme" is "the Messiah of the God of Israel." David "spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost," to describe his character and his conflicts: and this is the burden of the choral songs of Israel—a JUST ONE, one found truly righteous among the sons of men, shall, for his meritorious obedience, be exalted to the throne of the universe; and, in the language of a subsequent prophecy, "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth, even for ever." But the children of Belial, a significant epithet for the rebels against the throne of the Messiah, they will oppose his advancement, be long the source of remediless trouble to his faithful followers, and at length set all the powers of man at defiance: but no human hand restrains them, reserving them for judgment; and, like a pile of thorns, they are to be consumed with fire at the day of Christ's appearing and kingdom.

I am unwilling to lengthen this Introduction, but I think it material to obviate any misunderstanding that may arise respecting two points of doctrine, certainly of the highest importance.

I. Some passages of the Psalms, which have been thought to celebrate the moral attainments of the believer, I have been led to consider as celebrating the righteousness and moral perfection of the Saviour. I am aware of the opprobrious epithet that this will seem to deserve in the estimation of some: but it is very far from my intention to lessen any one real Gospel obligation of morality, or to quench the zeal for good works in the breasts of the reconciled children of God. If the "meritorious dignity" of good works is destroyed, "the dutiful necessity" remains.

That any one who states fairly and faithfully the doctrines of grace will escape, in a certain quarter, the objections^a which St. Paul anticipates from some of his opponents, is certainly not to be expected nor wished. That is not "the liberty of the Gospel," which is so clogged with conditions of works, attainments, and improvement of means, that it never could, in theory, become an "occasion of the flesh," or be used as "a cloak of maliciousness." It is some argument for the truth of any scheme of doctrine, that it is liable to abuse, on the same grounds as the inspired writers anticipate respecting what they taught. At the same time we must be careful, with the above-mentioned Apostle, constantly to meet with expressions of unfeigned abhorrence, all inferences from the doctrines of grace to the neglect of the holy precepts of the Word of God: "He that breaketh one of the least of these commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." "He

^a Romans, iii. 30; vi. 1—15.

that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.”—“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”

As a test of character we must appeal to good works. There are those “who profess that they know God, but in works deny him;” but, as the confident trust of the soul in prospect of “eternal judgment,” Christ, and Christ alone must remain—apprehended by that faith which shutteth out all good works in the office of justifying.^b It is “the grace of God that bringeth salvation;” and, “if it be of grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace:” and, “by the law of faith,” the appointed rule by which this gift of grace is vouchsafed, all “boasting is excluded;” all such boasting, if I understand the scriptural import of that term, as must be necessarily felt in the mind, to enable us to sing, respecting ourselves, certain portions of the Psalms in question. Nor can I see that in the personal sanctifying of the people of God, any room for such boast or glorying is restored; not at least in the presence of God; and it is in his presence that sacred Psalms are recited.

It is true there is a difference between the offending child that bewails his sin before the mercy-seat, and him who comes to lay upon the altar some grateful sacrifice which his faith has led him to make in his Master’s cause, or some labour of love that the righteous God has made himself a debtor to reward. It is true, there is a difference between these worshippers; and the upbraidings of conscience which the one will feel, will be very unlike the satisfaction of mind which the faithful servant will possess: but

^b Homily on Salvation.

He who restores the penitent to the joys of salvation, represses the boast of him "that hath done all things that were commanded him:" "Say, I am an unprofitable servant." And when we regard the purity and holy majesty of God, even this partial difference disappears, and both have need of the INTERPOSED HOLINESS of the Mediator, and of that sanctifying of the unclean which belongs to the priestly office of Christ, without which, repentance needs to be repented of, and the best services the believer performs, appear as polluted and defiled with sin. This holiness, therefore, must be our only boast and glory before God—"Christ"—"made to us sanctification:" hence, alone, arises, in the mind of the humble believer, a sense of freedom and of boldness in the divine presence: and this INTERPOSED and consecrating HOLINESS can alone remove those apprehensions of unfitness that will not fail to distress the mind in certain circumstances of temptation and of mental conflict, where all human goodness is, and is felt to be, "as a morning cloud, and as the early dew that goeth away."

II. The other point of doctrine on which I would not be misunderstood, is, if possible, of still greater importance.

We shall see, in the Scriptures which are the object of our researches, the HUMANITY, or human nature, of our blessed Lord, drawn in lines so deep, that I am fearful lest his DEITY seem to be forgotten.

His griefs and fears, his tears, his strong cries and entreaties, even his profession of trust and dependence on the help of the Almighty Father—all bespeak him truly human. We shall further remark, that the Psalms which anticipate the exaltation and glory of the Messiah, teach us to consider that glory as the reward which he had merited by his obedience as man, and which he is finally to share

with all his redeemed people.^c But it is necessary to bear in mind, what this glorious Being was in himself, before his assumption of human nature, and independently of the glories he receives as the obedient child of man; it is necessary to bear this in mind, because on it depends the value of the sacrifice that has been offered for us. What St. Paul has stated in his Epistle to the Philippians, contains the information we need: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, (that is, when he appeared to the Fathers of old time, as the God of Israel, he challenged for himself all the insignia of Deity,) but made himself of no reputation:" or rather, "emptied himself,^d and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God, also, hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

We are here called, first, to admire the great condescension of HIM, who had humbled himself to be "found in fashion as a man." This is a clear assertion of an original and independent existence of our Redeemer before he became man. He was not, then, originally a human being—nay more, it was humbling himself to take upon him the form of a servant—a servant to the heavenly Father! he was not then originally a creature of whatever order.

^c John, xvii. 22, 23.

^d Ἐαυτὸν ἐκενόωσεν. Compare also the meaning of *κενῶν* (1 Cor. i. 17), to make void, reduce to a state of inefficiency.

The exaltation which follows, we are next to notice. It is stated to be the fruits of his obedience unto death in that nature which he had thus voluntarily assumed. This high exaltation, this dignity of Lord, and all the glories which attach to the name of Jesus, are perfectly distinct from the original nature that he possessed before “he emptied himself”—diminished or impoverished himself, to become “a servant” and “a man.”

This glory, I repeat, cannot be the same with the original glory of the Son of God; because it is the reward of his humiliation: “Wherefore has God exalted him, &c.” And, therefore, though he is said^e to have had this glory with the Father “before the world began,” this must be understood, that he has this glory in design, in counsel, and in covenant; as we are said to have all our blessings given us in Christ before the foundations of the world were laid.

Again: it cannot be the same glory, because it is not equal to it. In his original glory “in the form of God,” our divine Master “thought it not robbery to be equal with God;” he claimed the full honor and worship of the only God. But when he has taken human nature upon him he is become, in the dispensation and economy of the eternal covenant, less than God—“My Father is greater than I.” He is still less than God:—Jesus, even in his glorified state, is still less than God—the exalted Jesus would think it a “robbery to be equal with God.” His union as man with God makes him not equal with God; any more than the union of his people with himself and with God, makes them equal with Christ and God.^f

—The acknowledging of Christ to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father, which is the utmost height of his

^e John, xvii. 5.

^f John, xvii. 22.

exaltation as man—the commandment of the Father, in virtue of which angels and men are to worship him, and honour him as they honour the Father—all this supposes subordination and inferiority: high delegated dignity, indeed, but expressly reserving the supremacy of the donor. “It is manifest that He is excepted that did put all things under him:” and even when “the Son shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” he is still something less than God, in the manifestation of His glories in created nature.

Those, therefore, who would account for and explain the asserted Godhead of the Redeemer, by his exaltation and the union of the manhood with the Father, whatever be their intentions, do deny his Godhead.

By the records of revelation, Jesus is not made GOD but LORD: and by the surest principles of reason, it were metaphysically impossible (an impossibility to Omnipotence itself, as implying a contradiction) to make that to be God which was not so originally; because it supposes the creation of an eternal, infinite, and immutable Being. If Christ then be God, it must be from his original essence before his assumption of the manhood, and independently of his exaltation in that nature.

That Christ is God, the Scriptures clearly assert; and the whole truth of our salvation depends on this fundamental doctrine.

From the passage quoted above we cannot but argue, that that which is rightfully equal to Deity and like to Deity, to which nothing else is equal or like, must itself be Deity. And though the Deity must be essentially one, yet the comparison of two together must leave room in the Deity for what we name personal distinction. I believe this deduction to be certain and incontrovertible. But if not,

the same truth is stated positively by the Scripture itself, and we may learn it without the necessity or hazard of any inference or deduction whatever. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."^g "The Word" was, as appears by comparing the 14th and 18th verses of the same chapter, previously to "his coming into the flesh"—"the only begotten Son"—"in the bosom of the Father."^h For the revelations of the Divine Being mentioned in this verse, had been made previously to the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The term SON OF GOD is, indeed, more frequently used of Christ in his subordinate capacity of Lord. This may be considered as its general import—it is the title under which the God-man or the Divine Humanity is acknowledged, when he is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. But the term "only-begotten Son" can never, if I mistake not, be interpreted in this sense. In truth, our Lord is not the "only-begotten in this capacity, but "the first-begotten," "the first-born among many brethren." And in addition to what has been already said, from the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, we may argue from the same Apostle's expression in his First Epistle, chap. iv.—"God sent his only-begotten Son into the world,"—that the subject of his discourse was the "only-begotten of the Father," before he was sent into the world. Nor should we omit to remark to those who hold the doctrine of the Trinity, that the production of the human nature of Christ is never, in the Scripture language, considered as the generative act of the

^g John, i. 1.

^h The translation of the 18th verse in the ancient Syriac is very remarkable: "God, man hath never seen; he the only-begotten God, who is in the bosom of his Father, hath declared 'him,'"—or, "hath made the manifestation."

Father, or ascribed, personally, to the Father at all, but uniformly to the Holy Ghost.ⁱ

To abide strictly by Scripture, therefore, which surely on so awful a subject, on a subject so far above the reach of human understanding, is safest and most consistent with humility—to abide strictly by Scripture, we cannot call Jesus Christ “the only-begotten Son of the Father,” in reference to his human birth of his Virgin Mother. But it is scriptural to use the terms, “only-begotten of the Father,” as well as “Word of God,” to distinguish the personality of Christ in the Godhead. Not that we can hope by these terms SON and WORD, both taken from the circumstances of humanity, adequately to describe what is this personal distinction and eternal relation. Our Lord’s own words forbid us to imagine this: “No man knoweth who THE SON is, but the FATHER.”^k

Keeping these important truths in view, we shall not only see in the Psalms the suffering Man, encompassed with infirmities, and put to the proof in all the frailties of our nature in its sinless state: we shall not only see the exalted Man, exalted by merit above his fellows—the King Messiah manifested in the glory of the Father and of his holy angels, spoiling principalities and powers, and trampling all his enemies in the dust; but we shall also, even at the time of his lowest humiliation, find him the acknowledged MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH—THE TRUE AND EVERLASTING GOD, —THE INCARNATE JEHOVAH.

I have ventured to say, “the truth of our salvation depends upon this fundamental doctrine.” I confine myself

ⁱ Εὐρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ εἶχουσα ἐκ Πνεύματος ἁγίου—το γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ Πνεύματος ἐστὶν ἁγίου—Πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελευσεται ἐπὶ σε, καὶ δυνάμεις ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοὶ διὸ καὶ τὸ γεννωμένον ἅγιον κληθήσεται υἱὸς Θεοῦ.

^k Luke, x. 32.

here, indeed, to the system of salvation by grace. Other systems, I believe, may reasonably stand on other foundations than the Godhead of the Son. For the Socinian to suppose the announcer of rewards and punishments—the mere pledge of a future resurrection, to be an incarnation of the Deity, were altogether superfluous and unnecessary. But if a real atonement be admitted—an expiatory sacrifice, a mediatorial righteousness, and an interposed and consecrating holiness, even a Socinian will acknowledge “this help” can be “laid” on nothing that is less than Deity.

But especially—Is not this the grand doctrine we mean to maintain as “the truth once delivered to the saints”—that “we are justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ?” Now grace and redemption cannot stand together without the deity of the Son. For what is bestowed gratuitously cannot be rendered at a price. If Christ be a creature atoning for creatures, the salvation so accomplished is not by the grace of God. By the grace of Christ it may be, but by the grace of God it cannot: otherwise grace is no more grace, and redemption is no more redemption.

Nor can any union with God of a created intelligence—of a creature who has a separate existence, alter the case or do away the inconsistency: for it is still the creature that atones to the Godhead, it is still the creature’s grace.

But none of these inconsistencies oppose themselves if we hold fast the doctrine of the Trinity, and believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here, if you fix your attention only on the distinct Persons of the divine Being, there is, indeed, the Judge that maintains his character and receives the ransom due to justice; and there is also the ransom stipulated to be paid by Him who is the Saviour of men:—but this is still WITHIN THE DEITY. As

this salvation comes to the creature, it is all of grace. The atonement has been already provided, and is part of the gift of God—the victim that propitiates is found “in the bosom of the Father.” And therefore HE is represented as gracious, in that “he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”—“that he spared not HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, but gave him up for us all.”

Though in the prosecution of this scheme of grace, it is necessary this destined Lamb of God, the victim HE hath provided to render his grace consistent with his justice, and compatible with his holiness; although it is necessary this divine being should take man’s nature upon him in order to serve and suffer, he does not unite himself to another person, or to an individual of the human race—to an intelligent creature that has a distinct existence from himself. But he is content to be made man, taking the lower nature upon him—content, though rich, to suffer poverty. He veils his Godhead in human nature, and never puts forth the energies of his divinity by his own personal act beyond the faculties of his assumed nature—“made in all things like unto his brethren, sin only excepted.”

For we should be careful to notice, that even when we contemplate our Redeemer in the character of the inspired Prophet sent of God, the miracles he performs, the supernatural knowledge he discovers, appear not in Scripture to spring from his own proper deity. All these powers and all this knowledge he professes to receive and to exercise as other prophets of the human race, through the anointing and indwelling of the Spirit of God, “given without measure to him” indeed, but differing not in kind from that which rested on the former delegates of Heaven. Independently, however, of his prophetical character, and of the unction of

the Holy Ghost that anointed him to be the Messiah, he was the everlasting God pleased to be bound and manifested in the faculties of a human mind and the organs of a human body. And it was this that gave the value to the humiliation, the sufferings, and the services he endured or performed, as man. This is "the mystery of God, even the Father, and of Christ."¹ God "made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," "purchased his church with his own blood;" and "Jehovah is a just God and a Saviour, and there is none besides."

With these preliminary observations, I commend the following TRANSLATION and EXPOSITION to the reader's indulgent perusal. It seems to be acknowledged, that the writings of the Jewish prophets are that part of the Scriptures, which needs in our public translation some revisal. This I have attempted; but am fully aware of the justness of the observations made by a periodical writer, which I quote to lower the expectations of the reader, or rather to excite his desire to read the original language of the Prophets. "To translate literally and beautifully at the same time, to be at once true to the sense and fame of the author, is, unless by a rare felicity, here and there in a single line, or little more, beyond the compass of man's wit to accomplish."^m Of the Exposition I would observe, that brevity and avoiding repetition where the subject of the Psalms is the same, has been much studied. The reader is not to expect the whole substance of every Psalm, embodied and expanded in the comment after the wonted manner. The Expositions are to be regarded rather as hints and observations respecting the design and meaning of the several parts of the Psalm,

¹ Του Θεου και Πατρος και του Χριστου.

^m Edinburgh Review, vol. vii. p. 134.

by the assistance of which, it is hoped, the reader will return to the perusal of the sacred text, or will use these sacred songs in his devotions with greater advantage; ⁿ—“ the Lord directing his heart into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Jesus Christ.”

ⁿ I say “ use these sacred songs in his devotions,” for surely of all books the inspired Psalter commands our choice as a manual of devotion. These “ choral songs of Israel,” especially when accompanied with their appropriate music, are well adapted to carry into execution the injunction of the Apostle—if indeed this inspired Hymn Book be not, as some suppose, the immediate object here had in view, “ speaking to yourselves in Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”—Ephes. v. 19.

THE
FIRST BOOK OF PSALMS,

ACCORDING TO THE HEBREW DIVISION.

A

TRANSLATION AND EXPOSITION

OF

THE PSALMS.

PSALM I.^a

- 1 MOST blessed is the man,
 Who hath not walked in the counsels of the wicked ;^b
- 2 And hath not stood in the way of sinners,^c
 Nor hath sat in the seat of the scoffers :^d

^a This Psalm is without a title in the Hebrew ; unless the three first words are to be regarded in this light ; which, upon the whole, is not improbable. The title, then, will be—**אֲשֶׁר הָאֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר** "The Beatitudes of the ble-sed Man." "Rich blessings of the Man who," &c —Dr. Lee. The first and second Psalms, as they stand in our copies, are in reality the first Psalm. The Righteous Man of our first, is the same as the King of the second.

^b On the meaning of the three words, denoting transgression, found in this place, I would remark, that the first, **רָשָׁע**, expresses the innate depravity or perverseness of the human heart. We discover its leading idea in Job xxxiv. 29 ; and in Isaiah lvii. 20. It signifies, *to disturb, to be in a violent state of agitation*, through aversion to an object, or through the raging of lust or concupiscence. The Arabic cognate **رَءِى**, signifies *to be full of lust* ; and the Syriac **ܕܐܪܡܝܬܐ**, *to be turbulent, or seditious*. The Syriac

translators have chosen this term to express the *αρεβης* of the New Testament. The expression, then, denotes the constant ebullitions of the rebellious heart, the restless turbulence of the carnal mind, "which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"—answering exactly to the Apostle's expression, *οἱ ἐξ ἐπιθειας*, "they who are contentious." "The wicked," **הָרָשָׁעִים**, says the Prophet Isaiah, "are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

^c **לָטָא** is the common term for *sin*, signifying, *to miss, or err* ; and originally, perhaps, *to slip, or fall*.

^d **לָפַךְ** signifies to turn or pervert the words of another : hence, to *deride, ridicule, or cavil*. It is often used in the Book of Proverbs, where its true meaning may be learnt : it seems to express the witty deriding of those sacred things, on which the wise man meditates with awe and religious fear.

- 3 For truly in the law of Jehovah was his delight,
And in his law would he meditate day and night.
- 4 And was like a tree planted by the streams of water,
That yieldeth its fruit in its season,
- 5 The leaf of which doth not wither,
And all that it beareth is matured.
- 6 Not so the wicked ;
For truly they are like chaff that the wind driveth away.
- 7 Thus the wicked shall not stand in judgment,
Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous :
- 8 For Jehovah approveth* the way of the righteous ;
But the way of the wicked shall perish.[†]

* Knoweth or ordaineth. ידד may mean *religious profession* or *worship*.
"Religio, cultus divinus." SIMON.

See Amos viii. 14, where Archbishop Newcomb renders *worship*.

† יבד "Infantum exitum habet."

EXPOSITION.

The generality of modern interpreters agree in considering this Psalm, as designating the character and happiness of the truly religious man, and as marking the reward that will follow his diligent study and observance of the commands of God's Holy Word. Our last public translators were evidently of this opinion, for they conceived themselves authorized in offering a slight violence to the text, in order to accommodate the language of the original to this interpretation: the verbs in the first verse being, as rendered in the old translation, in the past tense, and in strict propriety of language referring to all the blessed man has or has not been. For this reason, but more especially from what appears to be the general subject and design of these sacred odes, I have been induced to embrace the opinion of some among the ancient interpreters,[§] who conceive that this first Psalm is intended to be descriptive of the character and reward of the JUST ONE, whose merits,

§ St. Augustin, Jerom, &c.

sufferings and conflicts, will be found unquestionably to be the subjects of many of these sacred songs. God forbid that I should be understood to say that the believer in Christ is not bound to show his faith by his works; or that no particular promises of blessedness encourage his diligence in his vocation and in his keeping the commandments of God! this would be contrary to numberless passages of Scripture. What I mean to assert is, that the passage before us is not parallel to these Scriptures, but is to be classed with those which describe the righteousness of the law—"Blessed is the man that continues in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."^h In this point of view it will, I trust, be admitted, that though Christ must be imitated in his righteous and holy life, and that this imitation is the proof of their discipleship who call him Lord; yet all the righteousness that can meet the demand of the law, and all the holiness that can bear the light of the divine countenance, must be sought for in the blessed Surety alone, and can become ours only by gracious imputation, and by spiritual union with Him who is the end of the law for righteousness to him that believeth—who, "that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate;"ⁱ and of whom it is said, "that though he was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered; and, being made perfect, became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him."^k

Of Jesus alone could it strictly be said, "that he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" but, that the law of God was his perpetual delight, and the constant object of his thoughts day and night.

How widely different is St. Paul's description of the humble follower of Jesus Christ, in the seventh of Romans, even of the truly regenerated child of God, in whose "inner man" a delight in this same holy law has been kindled by the Spirit of grace! A perpetual conflict, attended with

^h See especially Augustin's Comment on Psalm xl. v. 17.

ⁱ Heb. xiii. 12.

^k Heb. v. 8, 9.

great self-condemnation and self-abhorrence, is the scene there exhibited. Surely, if this is a just description, no truly enlightened Christian could ever look to the first Psalm, as generally interpreted, for comfort and encouragement; but the blessing with which the Psalm opens, can light on the "holy child Jesus" alone, and can come upon us, only, as the happy consequence of that righteousness of faith "which is unto all, and upon all them that believe."

In the third verse we have, portrayed the prosperity of the JUST ONE. Like a tree planted by the water's side is he to flourish—his leaf always green, his blossom matured into the ripened fruit. As a description of any reward of the comparative righteousness of the people of God, we should be somewhat at a loss to understand this language; since those who stood foremost in the ranks of the Christian army were compelled to acknowledge that, but for their hope in a better world, they were "of all men most miserable:" but when we regard Christ in his public character as the object of this blessing, we immediately perceive its application to the increase of his spiritual family, and the unceasing prosperity of his kingdom—"There shall come forth a root out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots,"¹ &c. &c.

It is the Saviour, therefore, in his mystical body, that we are to consider as especially designated by the fruitful tree. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the earth, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."^m "I am the vine, and my Father is the husbandman." "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."ⁿ

"Not so are the wicked." The state of the rebellious, of those that are contentious and obey not the truth, is here contrasted with that of Christ and his people, the righteous, or justified, as the word afterward used strictly signifies; and we begin to perceive, what afterwards comes out more

¹ Isaiah xi. 1.

^m John xii. 24.

ⁿ John xv. 1—5.

plainly, that under the title of the wicked, the sinner and the scoffer, we have pourtrayed the anti-Christian apostacy of the latter days. "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core." These, the ungodly rebels, are "like the chaff which the wind driveth away." And we read in the prophecy of Daniel, that before the rising kingdom of Messiah,—“the stone cut out without hands,” all that had formed the fabric of human power and greatness, “became as the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, which the wind carried away, that no place was found for them.”

The Psalm, then, evidently concludes with an exhibition of what will be the fate of the wicked, when the King Messiah “shall set up the throne of his kingdom”—“at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him,” as the Apostle speaks: for then will commence that judgment which the ungodly cannot abide; then will be the great assembly of his justified people, in which the wicked, whatever may have been their profession and external compliance with forms of religion, will not be able to stand, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance of them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.”^o

^o 2 Thess. i. 7, &c.

PSALM II.^p

1 WHY have nations raged,
And peoples projected a vain thing?

^p Quoted as the first psalm in some copies of the Greek Testament. Acts xiii. 33.

- 2 Kings of the earth stood up,
And rulers consulted together,
Against Jehovah, even against his anointed.
- 3 " We will burst their bonds,
And cast their cords from us."
- 4 Sitting in the heavens he will laugh ;
The Lord will hold them in derision.
- 5 Then will he speak to them in his wrath,
And overwhelm them in his anger.
- 6 And as for me, I shall be anointed his king,
On Zion his holy mountain.^q
- 7 I will proclaim the decree of Jehovah :
He said to me, " Thou art my Son ;
This day I have brought thee forth :"^r
- 8 Inquire of me.
And I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance,
And the utmost extremities of the earth for thy possession :
- 9 Thou shalt break them with a sceptre of iron ;
Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."
- 10 Now, then, O kings, be wise ;
Be taught, O rulers of the earth.
- 11 " Do obeisance to Jehovah with fear ;
With trembling join the exulting choirs.¹

^q I prefer in this verse what appears to have been the reading in the copies used by the translators of the Septuagint version, which is approved by Houbigant and Geddes, and seems agreeable to the style of the Psalms.

^r To *bring forth*, or *produce*, represents the original much better than the word *beget*. " ילד sicut γεννω et τικτω et *pario*, de utroque sexu adhibitur, et metaphoricè ut *pario*, *produxit*, *effectum dedit*."

^s עבד, like the same word in the Arabic, signifies *to become a servant* ; and hence *to adore*.

¹ There is little doubt but that such is the meaning of גיל in this place. Agitation, either with joy or fear, is the leading idea of the word : hence we have in Arabic, بليل, *shaking, trembling, fear*. See Simonis Lex. Heb. Comp. Hos. x. 5. See also Gesenius ; also Dr. Lee on גיל.

12 "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry,
And ye be cut off in your course.

For yet a little, and his anger will blaze forth.
Most blessed is every one that hath taken shelter* in him.

^o Properly, *to kiss the hand to the mouth*: an ancient form of adoration, or profession of fealty to an acknowledged superior. Both the terms used on this occasion are to be understood as the *submission* of an enemy or

rebel. Kissing was an act of homage to a newly appointed king. 1 Sam. x. 1.

^x Or "had recourse to his patronage."

EXPOSITION.

No possible doubt can arise respecting the subject of this Psalm; even the ancient Jewish expositors perceived "a greater than David was here:" and the Christian will certainly require no other interpretation than that which has been given of it in the New Testament. We read in the Acts of the Apostles,^y that on a certain occasion, when these inspired teachers had retired in private from the insults and threatenings of their prosecutors, and had related to the church what had happened, "they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, *Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ.* For, of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

The potentates here mentioned, with the people over whom they ruled, were the first that combined to frustrate the purpose of God, in opposing, as far as in them lay, the exaltation of Christ; and multitudes of princes, their successors, with their subjects and dependents, have since

^y Chap. iv. 24, &c.

entered into the same conspiracy, to burst the bands and cast away the cords of God and of his anointed King. It appears too, from prophecy, that the opposition ceases not on the part of the kings and rulers of the earth, till the very appearing of Jesus Christ in glory. To the whole of this conflict we are doubtless to apply the language of the Psalm. And whenever we contemplate the rulers of the earth and the leaders of mankind combining and laying their plans for the hindrance of Christ's Holy Gospel, congregations, like the Apostles on this occasion, may edify themselves in reciting this Psalm.

But how contemptible are all the efforts of human power and policy, against the Almighty! the "only wise God!"—"Sitting in the heavens he will laugh," &c. The immediate object of their attack is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. The feeble efforts of combining monarchs and nations, and their deep-laid plans for the hindrance of his cause, and for the destruction of his church, at the sight and report of which the hearts of his children are sometimes ready to tremble—these are, to speak after the manner of man, the perfect sport of the great Ruler above. He derides them, while he suffers them; but at length he will interfere to punish all the opposers of his will. The Apostles teach us to remark, that all that fearful combination which they had witnessed of people and rulers, against the HOLY CHILD JESUS, had no more than accomplished the pre-ordained designs of Jehovah. It had not impeded, but had been overruled to promote the exaltation of the Son of God. And thus will it ever appear, when the designs of the divine permission are understood, that the wrath of man praises God, and the remainder of wrath doth he restrain, overwhelming in destruction, at the destined hour, the wicked instruments of his own good providence.

Moreover, notwithstanding all the raging opposition on earth, the Messiah is anointed in the courts above; where, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as is represented in another Psalm, he is told to sit, "till his enemies be made his footstool;" and then will he send the rod of his

power out of Zion. On which the Apostles remark to the apostate Jews—"Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both LORD and CHRIST."^z

The proclamation in the divine decree, "Thou art my son, this day I have brought thee forth," refers not immediately to the eternal generation of THE SON, as "the only begotten SON which is in the bosom of the FATHER"—his original Sonship; neither does it refer to the birth of Jesus of his virgin mother, though that were a sufficient reason why he should be called the Son of God; but it refers to what took place at that epocha, when, as St. Paul observes, "he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness," i. e. in his spiritual nature, after "the days of his flesh" were past, "by the resurrection from the dead."^a This is called by the same Apostle, in another place, *the bringing of the first begotten into the world.*^b Our blessed Saviour appeared not on earth "in the form of God," but as "the Son of man:" at his resurrection, however, the God-man is produced, and publicly acknowledged in the character of the Son of God, and as such he executes his royal priesthood in the heavenly Zion, in "the tabernacle above, not made with hands."

The expression in the divine decree, "Inquire of me," does not, I conceive, apply to the promise of the universal kingdom, which follows in the Psalm, but is equivalent to the constituting our Lord priest in the celestial tabernacle. It is as much as to say, "Consult the oracle for thy redeemed people, and return my responses to them." The rejected Jesus is, in short, "the Apostle and great High Priest of our profession, who has not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us"—"From henceforth expecting," we are told by the Apostle on the same occasion, "till his enemies are to be made his footstool."

For, as it follows in the Psalm, the possession of the

^a Acts ii. 36.

^b Rom. i. 4.

^c Heb. i. 6.

whole earth is awarded by the divine decree to the Messiah; and, notwithstanding all opposition, he will one day "take unto himself his great power, and will reign." We have much in the subsequent Psalms on this subject; but two quotations from the Prophet Daniel will, perhaps, best illustrate the prediction:—"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."—"I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven"—"and there was given to him a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."^c

The admonition to the kings and rulers of the world, at the close of the Psalm, no longer to attempt by policy or by force madly to oppose the kingdom of Christ, especially concerns the potentates of our days, and we hope will not be altogether without its effects.

However, it cannot be concealed, that the burden of every prophecy respecting the coming of Christ, is vengeance to rebellious and apostate kings and nations. This was symbolized in the last Psalm by the dispersion of the rebellious like chaff. And in the Psalm before us, the iron sceptre and the shivered vessel of the potter clearly forebode that the kingdom of Christ will begin with the execution of judgment upon the enemies of the Son of God. But though his wrath will soon—perhaps we may now say, very soon—blaze forth with sudden and destructive violence on the wicked, they are happy who have taken shelter in him, who have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in Christ, the crucified Saviour that was preached unto them. Taking shelter, or fleeing for refuge, as the alarmed inhabitants of the invaded country flee to the mountains, or as the trembling dove flies into the clefts of the rock, beauti-

^c Dan. ii. 44; and vii. 13.

fully symbolizes the act of saving faith ; and it will be found a common metaphor throughout the writings of the Old Testament. They are blessed who have taken shelter in Christ ; and this will be especially manifested at that day : for a part of this blessedness, as we learn from another Scripture, consists in their being made partakers with their Master in the glories of his reign : " He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father." ^d

^d Rev. ii. 26, 27.

PSALM III.^e

1 O JEHOVAH, how many are mine adversaries !

Many are they that rise up against me :

2 Many are they who speak against me,

" There is no salvation for him in Elohim."

SELAH.^f

3 But thou, O Jehovah, art a shield unto me,

My glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

4 I will cry unto Jehovah with my voice,

And he will hear me from his holy hill.

SELAH.

^e The title prefixed to this Psalm is, " A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom, his Son." But these titles are destitute of authority, as the careful reader of the Psalms will soon remark : they are to be regarded merely as marginal glosses of the Jews, but poor guides to the interpretation of Scripture.

^f Respecting the meaning of Selah, סֶלָה, nothing is known for certain :

the most probable opinion is, that it was to denote some *pause*, or *rest*, or *repetition* in the singing. Some have conjectured the three letters to be the initials of **למעלה** **השר** **קב** : " Let the singer return to the beginning." The reader cannot but observe how regularly (with the insertion of one short intercalary verse) this Psalm is divided by the repetition of this word.

- 5 For me, I have laid me down and slept,
I have awaked, for Jehovah sustaineth me.
- 6 I will not fear the multitudes of people
That have beset me around.
- 7 Arise, O Jehovah!
Save me, O my Elohim!
- 8 Truly thou hast smitten all mine enemies on the cheek;
Thou hast broken the teeth of the wicked:
- 9 Unto Jehovah belongeth salvation;*
Thy blessing be upon thy people.

SELAH.

* Our English word *help*, or *salvation*, by which we generally render יְשׁוּעָה, is hardly adequate to the original: it frequently supposes the *victory* and *triumph* of the object of the help vouchsafed.

EXPOSITION.

The suppliant, in this Psalm, speaks of the wicked, רְשָׁעִים, as synonymous with his enemies: a sufficient indication that the holy Champion, who entered the lists with wicked men and wicked spirits on behalf of his people, is to be considered as the speaker. And the force of this argument will appear more manifest, as we proceed in our consideration of these sacred songs.

The Psalm opens with setting forth the astonishing numbers of these adversaries. And, besides the general combination of deluded men, what mortal tongue could have numbered the hosts of spiritual foes that beset the holy Jesus in his course, and harassed him during all his pilgrimage, especially in his last dreadful conflict?

Over the afflicted and depressed man, his boasting foes considered their triumph as certain: they "esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;" and concluded him to be forsaken by the Deity, and delivered into their hands. In these circumstances we contemplate our divine Master, a perfect example of trust in God, and of that recourse to him in fervent prayer which becometh the afflicted servant of

Christ in all his troubles and adversities whensoever they oppress him. The Apostle has told us, concerning our Lord, now at God's right hand in glory, that "in the days of his flesh, when he had offered prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save him from death, he was heard in that he feared."^h So exactly, with one exception, was the blessed Jesus made like unto his brethren, the feeble sons of men.

The expressions in the 5th verse, "I have laid me down," &c., almost lead me to denominate this Psalm a morning hymn of our beloved Master, in the season of his humiliation. For the peaceful rest of one night, amidst his life of grief and sorrows, the humble Jesus is thankful to his heavenly Father, and we find on one occasion he was led to remark of his destitute state, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." But it is not the poverty of the houseless stranger, we well know, that is the great enemy to quiet rest; it is the tumultuous thought of the careful breast. And how many wakeful nights the solitudes of our afflicted Lord, in our cause, would not suffer him to sleep, but "watered his couch with tears," we have sufficient intimation in subsequent accounts of his passion.

And remark (ver. 6th) how every morning he awakes afresh to the incessant conflict with his numerous foes. And to this he has nothing to oppose, but trust in his God. And by this he conquers: for to the cry of the holy Sufferer the divine aid is not for ever denied; his foes are overwhelmed in destruction, and the prey is taken from their teeth. There was a dreadful period, when the persecuted Lamb of God was compelled to say, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness:" but at length, when justice was satisfied, he is heard and triumphs in his death.

The rescued victim, in the last verse, ascribes his deliverance to God, and implores his blessing upon the people whom he hath bought with his blood, and earned as the wages of the travail of his soul; as though he would

^h Heb. v. 7.

encourage us, after his own example, in all our sorrows and dangers, to seek help in God, and to expect deliverance, since he has conquered in our cause. "Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every one to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things have I spoken to you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."ⁱ

ⁱ John xvi. 33.

PSALM IV.^k

- 1 HEAR me when I call, O Elohim of my righteousness;^l
In distress do thou relieve me;
Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.
- 2 O children of men, how long shall my glory be counted for a shame?
Will ye love a vain thing? will ye seek after a lie?
SELAH.
- 3 But know, Jehovah hath distinguished^m his Well-Beloved;ⁿ
Jehovah will hear me when I call upon him.

^k The title our authorized version renders—"To the chief Musician on Neginoth; a Psalm of David." The former term *למנצח*, is by some understood to signify, *To the Giver of Victory*; by others, to denote that the Psalm is for perpetual use. *נבחר* is generally understood to mean instruments of music played upon by the stroke either of the fingers, or of a bow or quill, as the harp, viol, &c. The Jewish Rabbin have a conceit, that, when both these words occur in the title of a Psalm, it refers to the world to come, to the times of the Messiah.

^l "God of my righteousness," signifies—God, the vindicator of my righteousness. *אלהי צדקי* is thus rendered by the Syriac in this place. The expression *אלהי צדקי* cannot, I conceive, as some have supposed be interpreted to signify, in the language of the Psalmist, "God, the author and source of my righteousness, as accepted and sanctified."

^m "Distinguished, or bestowed singular honour upon."—HORSLEY.

ⁿ Or "an object of his loving kindness." *חסיד*, in its strictest and most grammatical sense, ought to signify, the *object* of the tenderest

- 4 Be moved with indignation,^o but sin not :
Commune with your own heart on your bed, and be silent :

SELAH.

- 5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
And put your trust in the Jehovah.
- 6 There are many "that" say, Who can show us good ?
Jehovah, cast thou the light of thy countenance upon us.
- 7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart,
More than "theirs," when their corn and wine had increased.
- 8 I can lie down and sleep in peace ;
For thou, O Jehovah, makest me to dwell alone in safety.

affection—of an affection *naturally* and *spontaneously flowing* from its agent, such as parents feel for their children. It is worthy of remark, that the Hebrews derived the name of the stork, the *avis pia* of the Romans, from this root, קָסִידָה. This bird, we shall recollect, was so celebrated for its affection to its young, that it was fabled to feed them with

blood from its own lacerated breast. It is applied to the Saviour in the Psalms, both as the object of the Father's love, and as the grand *depository* of love and grace for his people. It is doubtless an epithet of him, Deut. xxxiii. 8.

^o In the indignation which agitates you, O my people, at my rejection among men.

EXPOSITION.

The reader will feel assured, from the appeal to God as the vindicator of righteousness, with which the Psalm opens, that none but "Jesus Christ the righteous" can be considered as the speaker: if, at least, with me he understands the appeal to be general, and to respect the whole career of the suppliant's life—and I see no reason to narrow the meaning of the terms, so as to apply to some particular transaction in the life of a godly man, where he might appear as harmless in the midst of his injurious enemies. Those who understand the Psalms of the literal David, must of course embrace this interpretation: but the exposition now offered to the reader, is formed on the persuasion that these sacred odes have a higher and more important theme than David's righteousness or the unprofitable

^p I refer to Luke xvii. 10.

services of the redeemed people of God. I pretend not however, to see the full proof of this from the Psalm before us, or from some other Psalms taken separately, which might perhaps be understood, if they stood alone, to speak of the partial goodness and righteous deeds of the saints of God; but I arrive at this conclusion from a comparison of all these divine poems, one with another, marking the general design and scheme which appear to me to run through the whole of this portion of the oracles of God. Considering, therefore, the appeal to the righteous Judge, in this Psalm, as general and universal, we must say, no other, born of woman, except the immaculate Jesus, could so state the grounds of his hopes before the holy Lord God. We may therefore entitle this Psalm, A Prayer and Exposition of the Messiah: and, from expressions found in the fifth and last verses, may consider it as an Evening Hymn.

Again, we contemplate our divine Master, as an example leading us to put our trust in God, and to pray to him at all times. And, O wonderful grace! we are to ground our claims upon the same righteousness imputed to us as believers in Christ. But have all men this faith? Alas! we know that it is the condemnation of the children of men, that they neglect and despise the appointed plan of mercy; and, counting the Gospel a reproach, choose instead some idle vanity or false delusion as the object of their religious hope.

The third and two following verses I believe to be addressed by Christ to his believing people, who, in the midst of an apostate world, are not ashamed of Jesus, but trust in him who is that stone set at nought by the builders, but which nevertheless must become the head of the corner. They might be expected to feel strong agitations of anger and indignation against their false brethren, who had changed the truth of God for a lie; and this is a dangerous state of mind;—but the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. They must not fret themselves to do evil, but meditate in secret and be silent, waiting for God's vindication of the honour of their despised Saviour. If they dare not openly express their wounded feelings

before men, let them muse in secret and compose themselves in silence, and in patient waiting for Christ.

The children of men, whom the Redeemer addresses, are directed, in the next verse, to offer "the sacrifices of righteousness," or "the due sacrifices," the worship and religious services which he has appointed. The holy rites were all symbolical of the great atonement, and of its application to its destined objects; and, when offered in true faith, were the appointed means of conveying the everlasting benefits; nor should we forget "the living sacrifice" of which the Apostle reminds us as 'our reasonable service.'

But, as the sacred song represents the case, (ver. 6th,) men, in general, doubt the reality of the Gospel, and the certainty of its grounds of hope: "Who can show us good?" The answer of our GREAT PROPHET,—"Cast thou the light of thy countenance upon us,"—teaches us, that all knowledge and experience of good must spring from a manifestation of divine light to the souls of men. This he implores for himself, and for "the children that God has given him."—"No man can come to me, except the Father, that hath sent me, draw him."

Finally, from his own example—during "the obedience" which he, in his humiliation, "had learned;" while, "for the joy set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame," he instructs us concerning the holy joys which God puts into the hearts of his people. Our "meek and lowly" Master teaches us how we may "find rest for our souls." He bids us to contrast the happier lot of the servant of Jehovah, with that of the gay and thoughtless despisers of grace. He is happy, already receiving in his heart an earnest of heavenly joys. These joys far excel the short-lived pleasures of the prosperous sinner, the joy of harvest, or that which sends forth the shout of the vintage. The favoured servant of the Lord can lay down his head upon his pillow, enjoying heavenly peace: though solitary and alone, he hath no fear. Jehovah is his protection; "this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

PSALM V.^q

- 1 GIVE ear, O Jehovah, to my words ;
Regard my sighing :^r
- 2 Harken to the voice of my cry, my King and my Elohim ;
For unto thee I prefer my prayer.
- 3 Jehovah, in the morning^s shalt thou hear my voice ;
In the morning will I compare before thee, and examine.^t
- 4 Surely El inclineth not to a wicked "man;"
With thee a wrong doer shall not dwell.
- 5 The vain-glorious shall not present themselves before thee ;
Thou hatest all the workers of vanity.
- 6 Thou wilt destroy the speakers of falsehood :
The man of blood and of fraud Jehovah will abominate.
- 7 But I, in the abundance of thy love, I will go into thine house,
And in the fear of thee will I worship at thy holy dwelling.
- 8 Jehovah, guide me in thy righteousness ;
Because of my adversaries,^u make plain my way before me.

^q This Psalm bears the same inscription as the last, except that a word, which is supposed to mean "wind instruments," is substituted for what was there rendered "string instruments." The Septuagint version, however, which is followed by some others, has, "concerning the obtaining of the inheritance;" and Dr. Gill says, "To this agrees the old *Midrash* of the Jews."

^r הַבִּינִי, *sonus depressior*, à rad. Arab. [הִבֵּן] *SiMON*; perhaps,

"my rising thoughts."

^s בֹּקֶר, signifies the first dawn, or *looking out* of the morning.

^t אֶעֱרֹךְ לְךָ וְאֶנְפֹּךְ are, in this place, terms of most significant import: "I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up," is very inadequate. עָרַךְ signifies *to set out in*

order, especially one sort of wares against another, that they may be bartered at an equal value: hence, it signifies, *to compare together, to estimate, to apprise*. נִפְּךָ signifies *to watch, or survey* with diligent inspection. The worshipper will turn out all his heart before God, and carefully contrast it with the demand of the holy law; by this will he *examine* himself, and *prove* himself in his all-searching eyes. Kennicot supposes these terms to be "sacrificial," and to refer to the setting the wood in order, and examination of the sacrificed victim.

^u "Them that watch me." HORSLEY.—שָׂרִיר means not an adversary of any sort, but a wicked, malicious one; as the Arab. شَرِير [שָׂרִיר] *malus, malignus*.

- 9 For there is no truth^a in their mouths :
 Within them is deep depravity :^y
 An open sepulchre is their throat ;
 They flatter with their tongue.^z
- 10 Convict them, O Elohim :
 Let them fall by their own counsels :
 For the multitude of their crimes cast them out,
 For they have rebelled against thee.^a
- 11 But let all those rejoice who have sheltered themselves in thee ;
 Let them continually sing for joy, that thou protectest them ;
 Ay, let them triumph in thee, who love thy name.
- 12 Thou wilt bless the JUST ONE, O Jehovah ;
 As with a shield wilt thou encompass him with favour.^b

^x "Constancy." HORSLEY. — Perhaps "consistency."

^y The noun **דָּרוֹר** means the innate depravity of the human heart. See SIMON in **דָּרוֹר**.

^z "They set a polish with their tongue." HORSLEY. — "Their tongue is smooth to flatter." GEDDES.

^a **מָרָה**, like the Arab. **مَرِي** [مَرِي] implies the opposition and resistance, not only of open rebellion, but also of an unbelieving, cavilling, and disputatious spirit.

^b Bishop Horsley has well pointed out the difficulty of this line. He

proposes to take **כַּעֲנֵה לְיָ כַּעֲנֵה**, as in construction with **רָצוֹן** — "as a shield of good will wilt thou stand guard around him." If **כַּעֲנֵה** is admitted to be in construction, a meaning might be adduced from Prov. xxv. 13. **שָׁלֵב כַּעֲנֵה** (asservatio nivis, i.e. nix asservata): "As the preserved object of thy favour wilt thou crown him," or "guard around him." — **כַּעֲנֵה** is used in Exod. xvi. 33, for the vessel in which the manna was preserved. **רָצוֹן** is also the term so frequently applied in the law to express the *acceptableness* of the ceremonial sacrifices.

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley entitles this Psalm "A Prayer of Messiah, in the Character of a Priest, coming at an early Hour to prepare the Altar of Burnt-offering for the Morning Sacrifice." Perhaps we should rather say, A Prayer of Messiah, when, as the great High Priest of his church, he prepares and makes ready that sacrifice which he is, "once for all," to offer on behalf of his people.

"The whole burnt offering," or "holocaust," set in order upon the Jewish altars, with the examination and exposure

which the ritual directed to be made of the inward parts of the victim, was a clear and beautiful type of the presentation of the pure and spotless Jesus, when his soul was made an acceptable sacrifice to his Holy Father.

He is both the sacrifice and the priest. And who besides him could state such grounds before God, as the language of the Psalm clearly implies, for the acceptance of his prayers, and of the secret exercises of his mind? Who, besides our HOLY SURETY, could turn out such a heart, and set in order such a sacrifice before the pure and all-searching eyes of God?

Our Advocate considers, in the fourth and three following verses, those things in the character of that nature which he had assumed, which were displeasing in the eyes of the just and holy judge. And I think there is a special reference in these verses to the characters of "the false Christs" and "false prophets" that should appear in the latter days as the rivals and "supplanters" of the only Saviour, and should corrupt and lay desolate his church. But, free from every stain and spot of human depravity, he can offer a heart uncontaminated with the rebellion of the ungodly, sinless and pure, a perfect contrast to the proud and vain heart of the children of men. No guile was found in his mouth; and, though he had much to endure in the contradiction of sinners, and in the injurious treatment that he received from mankind; his soul was equally a stranger to the thought of violence and of circumventing policy. Though conscious, therefore, that for these things the wrath of the Almighty had blazed forth against the whole race whose nature he had taken upon him, he, notwithstanding, could enter with confidence into the sacred presence, "there to appear for us," as is expressed in the 7th verse.

The humanity, however, of our divine Master, though pure and sinless, was not devoid of that weakness which is essential to the creature, and which belongs to the verity of our nature. We therefore often find him, in the Psalms, praying for divine support, assistance, instruction, for protection against the multitude of malicious foes, earthly and spiritual, that continually beset his course during his personal

abode on earth, and persecuted his cause and people—his mystical body—when himself had ascended to heaven. Such is the prayer of the 8th verse.

The character of these enemies of “the righteous servant” of Jehovah next follows in the 9th verse; and the same Spirit of inspiration has taught us, by his holy Apostle Paul, to understand this verse of the enemies of the cross of Christ in general; of the Jews, and of all who, like them, possess “the form of godliness, and deny its power:” of all those professors of revealed religion, who, refusing “to submit to the righteousness of God,” “go about to establish their own righteousness,” by the deeds of the law, and by the perverted institutions of the church of God. Such characters have ever been found, both under the Jewish and Christian dispensation, notwithstanding their high pretensions to religion and virtue, to be the most inveterate enemies of the truth, the greatest persecutors of Christ in the days of his flesh, and in his mystical members, when he himself was caught up to “God and to his throne.”

“There is no truth in their mouths,” when they profess the religion of revelation; ignorant of their own hearts, they are “whole, and need not the Physician;” Pharisee, or nominal Christian, they reject the doctrines of grace. But, though they boast of their integrity, that same deep depravity, which the believing penitent acknowledges and bewails, as subversive of all his hopes, except through the endless pity of God, in setting forth Christ to be the propitiation for his sins; that same depravity, though they know it not, is in these proud declaimers. The profession of religion which conceals it, and establishes among men a character of sanctity, is gross flattery, glozing lies; “they flatter with their tongue.”—“Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”^c

^c Matt. xxiii. 27.

The 2nd chapter of the Epistle to the Romans may be referred to as a comment on the 10th and 11th verses; affording a full illustration of the manner in which convictions of guilt will one day be brought home to the self-justifying opponents of the Gospel; and how those who despise the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of God, are treasuring up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

In opposition to these apostate Jews and Christians, rebels against the light, who perish in their enmity to Christ and his Gospel, we have contrasted, in the 11th verse, a plain description of the believer in Jesus, and of the source of his trust and happiness. "He hath sheltered himself in God:"—"hath fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before him." The alarmed sinner, destitute of all help in himself, has sought protection in the covenanted mercies of Christ: "being justified by faith, he hath peace with God:"—"he stands and rejoices in hope of the glory of God," whose "love is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him." All these blessings he possesses in Christ. He is "found in him, not having his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith of Jesus Christ;"—the everlasting favour which Christ's merits, and the spotless sacrifice which he offered to God, have procured, comes upon him, and shall one day visibly crown the whole church with everlasting peace and glory.

As Bishop Horsley has remarked^d on the last verse, "The Psalmist, speaking with the highest assurance of the final deliverance and happy condition of the good, is driven, as it were, by the Spirit that inspired him, to a choice of words, fixing the blessing to a single Person, to him who is blessed over all, and the cause of blessing." And we shall see reason, as we proceed in our examination of the Psalms, to conclude, that not only the epithet, "Just One," is to be understood personally of Christ, but also the terms used above, rendered "ungodly," "wicked one," "the man of

^d Vol. i. 9.

blood," and "the man of fraud," have often a particular reference to some remarkable characters in the hostility carried on in these last times against Christ and his cause.

PSALM VI.^c

- 1 JEHOVAH, rebuke me not in thine anger,
Nor in thy wrath chastise me.
- 2 Be gracious to me, Jehovah, for I am weak ;
Jehovah, heal me, for my bones are shaken.
- 3 My soul is shaken^f exceedingly ;
But thou, Jehovah, how long?^g
- 4 Restore, O Jehovah ! deliver my soul :
O save me, for thy tenderness' sake !
- 5 For not in death is thy memorial :
Who shall celebrate thee in the abode of the dead ?^h
- 6 I am wearied with my groaning ;
Each night I make my bed to swim ;
I moisten my couch with my tears.
- 7 My countenance is wasted with grief ;
It is become old because of all my enemies.
- 8 Depart from me, all ye workers of vanity,
For Jehovah hath heard the voice of my weeping :
- 9 Jehovah hath heard my supplication ;
Jehovah will receive my prayer.
- 10 All mine enemies shall be confounded and greatly terrified ;
They shall turn back, and be confounded in a moment.

^c Nothing fresh occurs in the title of this Psalm, except a term that is supposed to designate a musical instrument with eight strings.

^f Or "terrified."

^g Or "how long wilt thou be."

^h A prayer for a speedy resurrection : Death and Hell are viewed as enemies ; in their destruction is the theme of praise.

EXPOSITION.

It is the remark of the learned Prelate to whom I so often refer, respecting the penitential Psalms in general, of which the one before us is the first, "that the circumstances in the aggregate will not apply to any character in the Jewish history"—"that there is good reason to conclude that the suppliant is a mystical personage." Who this mystical personage is, will admit of little question. It is none other than the predicted Saviour. Many of the griefs and sorrows which are the subject of complaint happened to his own proper person in the days of his flesh, while he sustained the character of the sinner's SURETY; but often the penitential song touches upon sorrows and injuries which could affect him only as the head of his mystical body the church, while he is afflicted in all the afflictions of his persecuted members upon earth. And whose griefs and afflictions, and, especially, whose injuries received from enemies, can be supposed so probably to be made the subject of the public psalmody of the house of God, as the propitiatory sufferings of the Messiah, the afflictions which he endured on our behalf, and those conflicts with his people's foes by which the victory has been won for us?

The sorrows of David, as of any other "vessel of mercy," his prayers in his distress, his trust in his God, and the deliverance that failed not to follow, might have been useful indeed as a memorial of the loving kindness of God, and as an ensample to future believers, that "they should trust and not be afraid," remembering "the sure mercies of David." And this purpose these Psalms, however misunderstood as to their real subject, have always answered to the pious worshippers of God. But now that the vail is further withdrawn, and we come to understand, that not the griefs and injuries of David, or of any other saint, are the subjects of these sacred songs, but those sufferings which rendered the blessed Jesus a "man of sorrows" in the days of his abode on earth, we see an importance in these penitential Psalms, as they are called, unperceived before. Here

we have all a greater interest. In the travail of this afflicted soul we are more nearly concerned. "Stricken, smitten of God and afflicted," as the despised sufferer appears before us, we shall remember that "he bare our griefs and carried our sorrows," "was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." We contemplate not merely the instructive example of a good man in affliction patiently submitting himself to God, or boldly struggling with adversity; but we become, as it were, spectators of a conflict, where the champion of our cause goes forth to contend for us. We see the great Captain of our salvation meet our foes in dreadful combat, and may well join in the shouts which salute him victor.

In another point of view, we see in the agonizing breast of our dear Redeemer, in these Scriptures, laid open to our view by the Spirit of God, "the" very "chastisement whereby our peace was procured"—"the" very "stripes by which we are healed." Lastly, when, divine justice satisfied, the heavenly Father relents, and all the instruments of the Saviour's afflictions, and all the enemies of his cause, are put to confusion, we witness our own release from sin and punishment, our justification to eternal life. In the exaltation of our Surety we receive the pledge of our final victory and glory: gathering also this comforting assurance, while, with regard to us his poor members, the warfare still continues: "for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."¹

The force of the example, too, of which we have spoken above, remains the same, when we apply these Psalms immediately and exclusively to Christ, as when they are applied literally to David with some faint, uncertain shadow only of the future Saviour. Or more properly speaking, the example, in our mode of interpretation, is much more impressing to all those "who suffer here with Christ," "drinking" in their measure "of that cup that he drank of," and being baptized with the baptism wherewith he was baptized." Because, beyond the example of God's goodness

¹ Heb. ii. 18.

to his afflicted servant in the hour of his distress, which David's experience might have afforded, there is a blessed "fellowship:" "we suffer with Christ, that we may be glorified together."

We are taught also this wonderful truth, that the sufferings of our Lord in his human nature, as they were greater than all that ever befell the sons of men, so they have rendered him the most merciful and compassionate of all the children of affliction. And this consideration is to be our encouragement now that the same Jesus is exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having "all power in heaven and in earth to save to the utmost them that come to God by him."—"For we have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin."^k

Having made these general observations, which apply equally to all the penitential Psalms, and to many others not so named, let us proceed to the more particular consideration of the one before us. It presents us at its commencement with the view of an afflicted soul smarting under a sense of the divine displeasure, and filled with the keenest apprehensions of the consequence of that displeasure.

If we were obliged to regard this as the language of a believer, we should be compelled to admit, that it betrayed a weakness in the faith, or a want of the full knowledge of the covenant of grace. We should be led, too, as we advance in the Psalm, to say, Here is a soul "in bondage through the fear of death." All these apprehensions are unreal, and derogatory to the faithfulness of God.—There is required in this case, not so much victory over external foes, as the suppliant in the Psalm seems to suppose, as over "the evil heart of unbelief in turning back from the living God."

But apply the Psalm to the Redeemer in the days of his humiliation, and all is consistent and analogous to the dispensation of the covenants of God.

Jesus had to endure the *real* effects of the divine anger against sin. His sufferings were not merely the corrections

^k Heb. iv. 15.

of a loving Father, but the penalties inflicted by a righteous Judge. For, "though he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He hath put him to grief," because, as the Prophet tells us, God "made his soul an offering for sin"—
 "For the transgression of my people was he stricken."

We have also clear intimation in the word of God, that the human soul of Christ was visited with the most dreadful apprehensions of that death which he was, of necessity, to taste for every one whom his redemption was to deliver from this awful penalty of their transgressions. St. Paul tells us, in a passage we shall often have occasion to quote in illustration of these Psalms, that Christ "in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared."¹ Can we then be surprised that these horrors of mind, aided perhaps by the temptations of infernal spirits, should be almost too much for the frame of one who was "made like unto his brethren" the feeble sons of men?

We learn from the relation of the Evangelists to what an extreme degree the mental sufferings of our blessed Lord had risen on the night previous to his execution. St. Mark tells us that "he began to be sore amazed,^m and to be very heavy:" or, as the word in the originalⁿ properly signifies, "was faint with fatigue—overwhelmed with sorrow." He observed himself to his disciples, "I am exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." St. Luke tells us, that while he was in an agony, and engaged in earnest prayer, "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground!"

The passion in the garden was a crisis, indeed, in our Redeemer's sufferings; but he had the same conflict to sustain, in some measure or form, during all the time of his abode in the flesh, even during those thirty years which he spent in retirement, before he entered upon his public life. What a view does the sixth verse give us of the Man of

¹ Heb. v. 7.

^m Εκθαμβήσασθαι.

ⁿ Αδύμνωτο.

Sorrows in the retreat of his solitude!—"I am wearied with my groaning—every night I make my bed to swim: I moisten my couch with my tears."

The seventh verse: "My countenance is wasted with grief: it is become old because of all mine enemies"—seems to ascribe a premature old age to our afflicted Lord, the known effect of extraordinary grief and distress, and such as might be well supposed to have been brought upon him by his accumulated miseries. Isaiah foretold, in a subsequent age, that many would see him with astonishment: "His visage so marred more than any man, and his form than the sons of men." So applicable to the subject before us is the description which a modern poet has given of this same effect of great and extraordinary sorrow upon the human frame, that I cannot forbear a short quotation:

"Sunk was that eye
Of sov'reignty; and on th' emaciate cheek
Had penitence and anguish deeply drawn
Their furrows premature, forestalling time,
And shedding upon thirty's brow more snows
Than threescore winters, in their natural course,
Might else have sprinkled there."—SOUTHEY.

But there was a period to the Redeemer's sufferings. He was "obedient, indeed, unto death, even the death of the cross," and his departed spirit sunk into the abode of the dead. But he could not be "holden by the bands of death." His prayer is heard; and in death he triumphs over all his enemies. As it affected his redeemed, he "abolished death:"^o—"Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."^p—"Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them."^q—"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell, and of death."^r The experience, therefore, which this Psalm discloses, is no longer the proper feelings of the spiritual believer in Christ, however it may be the will of his heavenly Father that he should drink

^o 2 Tim. i. 10.

^p Heb. ii. 14.

^q Col. ii. 15.

^r Rev. i. 18.

of the cup of his Master's sufferings. The believer in Christ has no anger to fear in God. Although, "if need be, he is in heaviness through manifold temptation;" yet the Holy Ghost the Comforter will never forsake his breast; "peace" and "joy unspeakable, and full of glory," "quietness and assurance for ever," are the inheritance which he should claim, through the death and resurrection of his triumphant Redeemer. O Death where is thy sting? O Hell where is thy victory?

PSALM VII.*

- 1 יְהוָה, my Elohim, I have taken shelter in thee;
Save me from my persecutors, and deliver me;
- 2 Lest *HE* tear me to pieces, like a lion,
Rending me asunder while none delivereth.
- 3 Jehovah, my Elohim, if I have done this;
If there be iniquity in my hands;
- 4 If I have returned evil to him that was at peace with me;[†]
When[‡] I would liberate[§] them that without cause were mine
enemies;
- 5 Let the enemy pursue me and take me,
And let him trample my life on the ground,
And lay my glory^{||} in the dust.

SELAH.

* A new term occurs in the title of this Psalm, "Shiggaion of David." Concerning the meaning of שִׁגְיִון interpreters are not agreed: some refer it to the music that was to accompany the Psalm, others to the Psalm itself, and from its etymology suppose it to mean a *wandering ode*, or a Psalm consisting of various metre; which, as far as we can distinguish, appears to be true in fact. It follows, "which he sung to Jehovah concerning the words" or "the affair of Cush the Benjamite." No such name as "Cush the Benjamite" occurs in the Scripture history; and the Jewish editors have neglected to inform us, who they

supposed him to be. But the authority of the applications of these songs I question altogether.

[†] "Si malum malo rependi." CASSIUS.

[‡] On the contrary.

[§] וְיָצִי signifies both *to deliver*, and also *to spoil and strip*. The meaning of these two lines is somewhat obscure, except as containing in general a protestation of innocence.

^{||} Perhaps we should render, "And make me to inhabit the dust:" כְּבוֹרִי appears to signify properly "my liver;" that bowel being used as a synonyme for "person," or "life."

- 6 Arise, Jehovah: in thine indignation
Lift up thyself against the raging of mine adversaries,
Raise up for me the judgment that thou hast ordained.
- 7 Let the congregation of the nations be gathered around thee,
And over it resume thy high tribunal.^a
- 8 JEHOVAH WILL JUDGE THE NATIONS.
- Judge me, Jehovah, according to my righteousness,
And according to the integrity that is in me.
- 9 O let the wrong of the wicked have an end,
And establish the righteous:
- 10 And let the righteous Elohim try the hearts and the reins.
My defence is in Elohim giving the victory to the upright in heart.
- 11 Elohim is a righteous judge:
Yea Elohim is angry from day to day,
Though he resume not his tribunal.^a
- 12 He will sharpen his sword,
He hath bent his bow and made it ready;
- 13 And he hath prepared his^b instruments of death,
He hath made his shafts^c for the swift arrows.^d

^a "Resume thy high tribunal." Such I conceive to be the force of **למרום שוב**. Bishop Horsley renders the line, "And over it return to thy supremacy:" Mudge, "And for their sakes be thou exalted on high:" the Targum paraphrase, "Return thou to the house of thy shechinah." **עליה** may perhaps be understood, "concerning this affair."—"Resume thy judgment-seat, in order to investigate this cause in which I have been prejudged by the adversary."

^a For this meaning of **שוב** I have recourse to **שוב** in the seventh verse. See the former note. But perhaps the authorized translation is best, "If he (the enemy) will not turn."

^b Literally, "for himself"—"for his use." We must keep in view the metaphor of the warrior preparing for action.

^c **קֶסֶף** signifies, not only an arrow, but also the *shaft*, or wooden part of the arrow or spear. See 1 Sam. xvii. 7, comp. 2 Sam. xxi. 19. "Both these," observes Parkhurst, "seem to be called from the *divided* or *separated* pieces or slips of wood of which they are made."

^d Or "the quivering"—"nimble"—"rushing"—"falling," or perhaps "flaming arrows." See Syriac and Arabic cognates. "He shall make his arrows to become fiery." PROF. LEE.

- 14 Behold *HE* is in travail with iniquity ;
 But though mischief was conceived, disappointment is brought
 forth.^e
- 15 He formed a pit and dug it,^f
 And he hath fallen into the trap he was making !
- 16 His mischief returneth upon his head,
 And on his own crown his violence descendeth !
- I will praise Jehovah for his righteous vengeance,
 And will chant the name of Jehovah, Most High.

^e Compare Job xv. 35.

of the Arabic حفر "Dug it over so

^f Or, perhaps, from a comparison as to cover and hide it."

EXPOSITION.

I feel no hesitation in considering this Psalm, with Bishop Horsley, as "the appeal of Messiah to God against the false accusations of his enemies."^g We are in this, however, as in many of the other Psalms, not to confine the application to the opposition made against our Lord personally during the days of his flesh, though this is primarily intended; but are to keep in view the whole of the contest between "the seed of the woman" and "the serpent and his seed," until their final overthrow in the great day of the battle of Almighty God.

Our Lord, as we gather from several passages of Scripture, was himself much exposed to false accusation and uncharitable imputations; and he prepares his people for a similar treatment; "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." When, however, we so extend the meaning of the Psalm, we are to be careful to remember that it is the language of the GREAT ADVOCATE respecting his injured members, and not the protestation of

^g Bishop Horne's notion of this Psalm was not different from this; for he says, "it may be considered as the appeal of the true David and his disciples against the accuser and his associates."

the believer himself maintaining his own innocency, glorying in his integrity in the presence of the righteous Judge, and invoking that vengeance which is threatened on his injurious adversaries.

In his personal conduct towards his fellow-creatures, the true disciple of Christ will indeed "exercise himself to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man," and may appeal to God and man how "holily, and justly, and unblameably" he has conducted himself on some particular occasion, where his character had been impugned by man. But he cannot do so in a general appeal to the tribunal of God, in view of the manifestation of his righteous judgment, rendering to every man according to his works. He may know that the world has judged him harshly and wrongly on certain occasions; but he must know also, that if the world, or "the accuser of the brethren," could penetrate into all his heart, he must appear in other things most vile and worthless; and, therefore, such an appeal as this to the tribunal of the last day, as made by a pardoned sinner respecting some particular false accusation where so much besides is wrong, were highly indecorous:—were, indeed, the very conduct which the divine wisdom has reprobated in the case of Job. But we all know that very frequently much slander attaches to a Christian, totally independent of his own demerit, be it what it may, on account of his religion. The animosity is not against him personally, but against his Master and his righteous cause. HE is persecuted on these occasions in his members, and the diabolical slanders that are spread concerning the principles and actions of his people are aimed at his dishonour. These are "the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Against the slanderers and persecutors both of his person and of his righteous cause, we consider, therefore, our Holy Advocate as appealing to the throne of the Most High in this Psalm, sheltering himself in the divine protection, and anticipating the coming of that day when the Ancient of days shall sit and decide the cause between the SON OF MAN and all his gainsayers and injurious adversaries. And

we may mark as an answer to this appeal, the event foreboded, when among the symbols of the Revelation, "a loud voice is heard in heaven," saying, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death."^h Then will God judge the nations, and the JUST ONE will be established in his kingdom: He who alone of all the children of men could rest his cause on his own merits, and on the perfect purity of his heart in the sight of the omniscient Judge.ⁱ His people will indeed be exalted with him, and every adversary silenced: not, however, by their righteousness or by their holiness, but because "they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." For the confession of his hated name, they were once hardly judged and slandered in the world; but he will now make this "reproach to cease in all the earth," and will exalt them to his glorious throne.

In the mean while (ver. 11, &c.) the rebellious nations and persecutors are admonished, that, although the day of vengeance is deferred for a season, the righteous Judge is by no means an unconcerned spectator of their calumnies and injustice; but may be contemplated by the eye of faith as a warrior making ready for action:—"whose judgment now for a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

The latter part of the Psalm (ver. 14, &c.) we cannot mistake. The metaphors are common in Scripture to denote the restless malice of Satan, and of those earthly enemies of the cross of Christ, whom he instigates to oppose his cause and depress his people. They are ever plotting

^h Revelation xii. 10, 11.

ⁱ Bishop Horsley's note is well worth transcribing in this place: "This confident assertion of his own righteousness and integrity can belong to no character but Jesus Christ himself: David had no such innocence to boast; he was, like other men, a pardoned sinner; polluted with adultery, and stained with murder."

and forming their wicked schemes with all the crooked arts of a circumventing policy ; but all are rendered abortive by the over-ruling of a superior wisdom. The wise are taken in their own craftiness, and by a just retribution the evil they designed for others is brought upon themselves.

This will be found the general issue of the contest between the anointed Saviour and his opponents ; they do but “kick against the pricks :” but we shall see cause to conclude, as we proceed to consider many very similar passages in the Psalms, that the adversaries of the latter days, and their awful catastrophe, are especially in the view of the Spirit of prophecy. I am more and more convinced that the general testimony of the prophetic Scriptures is intended to speak to our times and the times shortly to arise ; and that this is the meaning of that wonderful providence, that has stimulated so many hearts to circulate at this particular era the sacred volume “among them that dwell on the earth ;” and to send it to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. In the expectation of this righteous judgment, “and so much the more as we see the day approaching,” ought the disciple of Jesus Christ, amidst all his injuries and insults, to commit himself to Him that judgeth righteously, and without “rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling,” employ himself only (ver. 17), as it is his happy privilege, in blessing and praising God, waiting for his Son Jesus Christ from heaven.

PSALM VIII.*

- 1 O JEHOVAH our Lord,
How great is thy name in all the earth!^l
'Thou' that settest forth thy glory above the heavens!^m
- 2 From the mouths of children and babes
Thou hast established strengthⁿ against^o thine adversaries,
To silence the enemy and the accuser.^p
- 3 When I behold the heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The moon and the stars which thou hast disposed;
- 4 What is man, that thou shouldest be mindful of him,
And the son of man, that thou shouldest regard him?
- 5 That thou shouldest make HIM for a little while^q lower than
the Elohim,
And crown him with glory and majesty.

* Respecting the word הַנְּהִיָּה, found in the title of this Psalm, nothing is known for certain. The most probable conjecture refers it to the tune or music.

^l The repetition of these two first lines at the end of the Psalm, has led to the supposition that they are to be kept distinct from the rest.

^m אֲשֶׁר הִנֵּה has created great difficulties. The ancient versions seem to have read הִנֵּה הַנְּהִיָּה. Simons explains "הִנֵּה" "per Aphæresin et cum הַנְּהִיָּה, Parag. הִנֵּה הַנְּהִיָּה, quod nominascit et

pro datione sumitur. Psalm. viii. 2, Qui locus difficilior explicandus est vel ex phrasi synonymica יְהוָה נִכְבֹּד Ps. xxix. 2.—xxvi. 3; 1 Chron. xvi. 29, ut sensus sit: *Quin etiam (vel quia) datio gloria tuæ (est) super calis, i. e. etiam (vel quia) super calis gloria tibi datur et tribuitur.* Coll. Ps. cxiii. 4, et Ps. cxlviii. 13, vel ex Ezech. xxxix. 21, ubi נִכְבֹּד נִתָּן est *edere, manifestare gloriam, &c.*" Or we may consider הַנְּהִיָּה as the nominative of הִנֵּה.

ⁿ יָסַדְתָּ עֵץ "Thou hast established strength," or "ordained it to be strong," or rather "invincible and victorious:" i. e. the glorious praise of the name of the Lord Jehovah, even from the lips of infants, shall be attended with such irresistible power as to silence every adversary. It is remarkable that עֵץ, in the Arabian language (عز), signifies to over-

come another in speaking. "Laid the foundation of triumphant praise."

^o לִמְעַן, more usually "with respect to," or "because of;" literally, so as "to reply to," and "answer."

^p "To silence," or "cause to cease," or possibly "until the leading captive of the enemy and accuser." מִתְנַקֵּם is properly, *one who endeavours to vindicate himself*, we may suppose, in asserting his rights or claims over another; i. e. brings an accusation against him. Bishop Horsley has rendered "self-tormentor."

^q The words in the original are תַּחֲסִרְהוּ מֵעַט מְאֹלָהִים "Thou madest him a little," or "for a little

- 6 That thou shouldest give him dominion over the works of thine hand,
Putting all things under his feet :
- 7 Sheep and all cattle,
And all the beasts of the field,
- 8 The birds of the air and the fish of the sea,
Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the waters.
- 9 O Jehovah, our Lord,
How great is thy name in all the earth !

while inferior to God, or the gods." The more common signification of מַלְאָכִים is to *bereave*, to *deprive of*, to *make destitute*, or *empty*. See 1 Kings xvii. 14 ; Eccles. iv. 8 ; and Isaiah xxxii. 6. The Arabic مَلَائِكَة signifies also to *strip* ; and also to *weary*, to *put to grief*. Every way the meaning is important ; but I think the train of reasoning in the first and second chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews has so far corroborated the translation of the Septuagint, which the Apostle quotes, ἡλαττωσας βραχυ τι παρ' αγγελους, "Thou hast made him a little," or "for a little while lower than the angels," that we are guided by this infallible interpreter to understand the term מַלְאָכִים not of the divine Being, but of some who bore his name. The question is, how it comes to signify in this place, and also in Psalm xvii. *angels*. For in this latter passage, where the Apostle renders (chap. i. ver. 6), "Let all the angels of God worship him," we read in the original, "Worship him all ye Elohim :—" and this passage, if I mistake not, affords the solution of the difficulty. Quoted at length, it is, "Confounded are all they that worship graven images, that boast themselves of idols ; worship him, all ye gods." Now, taking the term Angel to signify all the agents of divine Providence, both material and intellectual, but especially that superior order of beings that intervene between the SUPREME BEING and mortal man, we shall immediately recollect that these were the objects of religious

worship among the heathen ; for those inferior deities, known among the Greeks by the name of *damons*, were what the Hebrews called *angels* : hence, when St. Paul would warn the Colossians against this idolatry, he calls it, "the worshipping of angels." (Chap. ii. ver. 18.) As the objects, therefore, of the mistaken adoration of the heathen, and perhaps of apostate Christians too, angels are called gods : "There be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth." The Apostle to the Hebrews is proving that the Son is higher than all these great agents of the invisible Deity, whom men have foolishly worshipped. Whatever they are, they must themselves worship the Son of God : He is not a mere agent or servant of the Almighty. For a little while, indeed, he took on him the form of a servant, had been made even lower than the angelic beings, but now he was "declared the Son of God with power." He is henceforth not the "faithful servant in the house ;" but "the Son over his own house." This passage, therefore, affords no proof for the proper application of the term מַלְאָכִים Elohim, to any being less than the Most High ; since it is applied to angels or dæmons only in respect of their having become the objects of worship to idolatrous men. In this sense only are there "Gods many and Lords many." The typical import of the term, as applied to certain characters in the Jewish church, who were shadows of "Him that was to come," and therefore bore his titles, we shall have to consider in the 82nd Psalm.

EXPOSITION.

Had we been left without a guide in the interpretation of this Psalm, nothing perhaps would have induced us to refer it to any other subject, than the placing of man at the head of this lower creation. "And God created man in his own image"—"and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." But the application of several quotations from this Psalm in the New Testament entirely destroys this notion. The Apostle, indeed, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, expressly refers the Psalm to the "world to come" (*την οικουμένην την μελλουσαν*. ch. ii. 5), that future world which is to be put in subjection, not to the angels of God, but to the Son of God and his risen saints.

And here we discover an important meaning in the opening of the Psalm. It is, at present, but in a very confined sense, that we can call Jehovah the honoured Master and adored Lord of all the earth. With respect to the intelligent creatures that are upon it, he is generally forgotten and rejected: but there is a day coming when the victories of the Word of God shall be complete—"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth."^r This is the glorious era anticipated in this prophetic Psalm, when at the excellent and adored name of Jesus "every knee shall bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue shall confess *that Jesus Christ is Lord*, to the glory of God the Father."

In this connexion too, we clearly distinguish who are meant by "the children" and "babes," in whose feeble lips is to be found a plea that shall "abide in strength," and overcome every adversary. These, or equivalent terms, very frequently denote in Scripture the people of God. They are "the weak," "the foolish," "the despised things of the world," whom "God hath chosen:"—"the babes" to whom

^r Psalm xlvii. 2. Zech. xiv. 9.

the Father is pleased to reveal that which he hides from "the wise and prudent:" they are "the little ones that believe in Christ," "the poor in spirit," "the meek," "the sorrowful," whom Jesus pronounces "blessed." These epithets of weakness and humiliation often indeed belong to the redeemed of the Lord, as contrasted with the proud contemptners of religion, among their fellow-creatures in the short hour of their prosperity. They are their superiors perhaps in age, in authority, and in understanding. But in an especial manner do the terms apply to the followers of the Lamb in regard to their spiritual foes, "the principalities and powers with which they wrestle."

Notwithstanding, God hath ordained that these despised objects of his grace should exalt his praise and glory throughout the world, and extol it to the highest heavens. "Glory to God in the highest" are they to set forth when they sing the praises of God and of the Lamb in the courts of the heavenly Zion: and even now in the days of their humiliation, though they bear their witness "in sackcloth," "in much weakness," and "in fear and trembling," yet have they "a mouth and wisdom" that all their adversaries are "not able to gainsay or resist." In the language of another Psalm, while "the praises of God are in their mouths," "a two-edged sword is found in their hands." With this they subdue all their opponents: and principally that great adversary of God and of his Christ so perpetually pointed out in the language of Scripture.—Him, too, shall the feeble children of men whom God hath chosen, resist and overcome; and shall overcome him with this very instrument, their lips confessing the Lord Jesus, and hymning his praise. Thus they cast down "the accuser of the brethren," who would vindicate his right over them, "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony."

The application of the passage before us by our Lord to the children in the Temple, when they saluted him with "Hosannah to the Son of David," is much to be remarked. Little children, by a gracious construction of the Covenant, are ever considered as belonging to the believing people of God; and on this occasion, while their proud seniors were

in a state of hostility to the Saviour, He who giveth grace unto the humble, opened their feeble lips to sing his praise and to salute their King. "Hosannah to the Son of David," is the perfection of praise. It is a theme which the redeemed from among men are destined to set forth above the highest heavens. In the lips of the least of the Redeemer's flock it is ordained to be irresistible strength, a song of triumph and of proud defiance against their mightiest foe.

But what is *man*, that he should be the object of such regard and of such concern with the Almighty Creator? When we contemplate his creation, and especially when the reflecting mind surveys the starry heavens, and is enabled to form some estimate of the immense size and distances of the unnumbered worlds that present themselves to his view, into what comparative insignificance man and his habitation, and all his concerns, fall? It may, therefore, well excite astonishment that man should be the object of such regard. What calls for our admiration is, not that man should have been set, at his creation, over the inferior animals of that globe which was evidently framed or prepared for his habitation. This appears not out of the common order of things. More enlarged views of the power and greatness of the Creator by no means render his generosity to man, in this particular, more wonderful and more extraordinary, but the reverse. Consider, however, man as the object of that tender love of the Almighty Father, which, to raise him from his lost estate, is represented to have procured the incarnation and passion of the Eternal Son. This is wonderful! That the Lord and Creator of unnumbered worlds, to rescue the rebels against the light, in this insignificant planet, from the penalties of justice and the consequence of depravity, should himself assume their nature and suffer in their stead, that he might become "the author of eternal life to them that obey him"—it is this that excites the astonishment of the thinking mind; and which, I believe, in the view of the philosophical infidel, appears so out of proportion as to lead him to deride the extravagant hopes of those to whom the great Jehovah hath revealed the secret of his love.

For the remainder of the Psalm the Apostle must be our immediate guide. It appears from his comment in the second of Hebrews, that the Holy Ghost, in the latter part of the Psalm, is not speaking of the station which the first man Adam was made to assume at his creation over the inferior animals, but that he is speaking of the "second Man, the Lord from heaven," of his taking our nature upon him, and so becoming inferior for a short time, as to that nature, to "the thrones, and principalities, and powers," whom his own hand had made, and whom guilty men were worshipping as their gods. Lower than the angels was he as man: lower than the good angels, for they were employed to protect his feeble humanity, and appeared to strengthen him: lower than the bad angels, for they continually beset his path, and in their permitted hour were suffered to triumph in his death.

In consequence, however, of his meritorious obedience as "the Son of Man," he was in that nature to be exalted far above all intellectual beings, and in his rise was to exalt to the same eminence the humble objects of his redemption. "For unto the angels," says St. Paul, "he hath not put in subjection the world whercof we speak: but one in a certain place testifieth, saying, *What is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower (or, for a little while lower) than the angels: thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thine hand; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.* For in that he put *all* in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made for a little while lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste of death for every one. For it became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause, he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

From this exposition of the Apostle, it appears beyond

all doubt that the subject of this Psalm is the exaltation of the redeemed from among men, in and with Christ their surety and head, to be the inheritors and lords of a better world to come. "Sheep and all cattle, &c." with all the furniture of this lower world, are indeed specified as subjected to the Son of Man; but we are to understand this as symbolical of the new creation in that "better world," for which, "according to his promise, we look."—"Because the creature itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." And because of this, "the earnest expectation of the creature (or of the creation) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."^s

How glorious, *then*, will be the name of Jehovah our Lord in all the earth; even of Jesus our only Lord and Master; appointed "heir of all things" in the capacity of the elder brother of the redeemed family! "Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."^t

The dominion of the Lord of glory who is exalted above the Heavens, is to be extended over the renewed earth, "according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places."^u "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature."^x

^s Romans viii. 19—23.

^t John i. 51.

^u Ephes. i. 20, &c.

^x Col. i. 15.

PSALM IX.^y

- 1 I WILL sing thy praise, O Jehovah, with my whole heart ;
I will tell of all thy wonderful works ;
- 2 I will rejoice and exult in thee ;
I will chant thy name, O Most High ;
- 3 Because my enemies are turned back :
They fell ; they perished at thy presence :
- 4 For thou hast done me justice and right,
Thou sittest on the throne, judging in righteousness.
- 5 Thou hast rebuked the nations, thou hast cut off the wicked
‘ one ;’
Their name hast thou blotted out for ever and ever.
- 6 Desolations have consumed the enemy for ever :^z
The cities thou hast destroyed, their memory perishes with
them.
- 7 But Jehovah is enthroned for ever,
His tribunal is prepared for judgment :
- 8 And he will judge the world in righteousness,
And will administer justice to the nations in equity.
- 9 Moreover, Jehovah will be a refuge for the oppressed,
Even a refuge in seasons of distress ;
- 10 Therefore let them who know thy name, trust in thee ;
For thou hast never forsaken them that seek thee, O Jehovah.
- 11 Sing unto Jehovah that is enthroned in Zion,
Proclaim his doings to the nations :

^y The title of this Psalm, as usual, from the uncertainty of its meaning, has given occasion to various conjectures. “Houbigant reads the title, ‘To the Precentor, the Mysteries of the Son. A Psalm of David. And so the Septuagint, Ὕμνος τῶν κρυφίων τοῦ υἱοῦ. The reading of עלמור in one word is confirmed by many

MSS.”—HORSLEY. Others, however, conjecture that the whole concerns some unknown regulations for the music. The same may be said respecting the term דְּהִבְיִן, which occurs with סֶלָה in the midst of the Psalm.

^z The desolations caused by the enemy are put an end to for ever.

- 12 For he hath required blood, he hath taken account of it,
He hath not disregarded the cry of the afflicted.
- 13 Be gracious to me, O Jehovah; see my affliction from my
adversary,
O thou that liftest me up from the gates of death :
- 14 That I may recount all thy praises :
In the gates of the daughter of Zion will I rejoice in thy salvation.
- 15 The nations are sunk into the pit that they made,
In the net they concealed are their own feet taken.
- 16 Jehovah is manifested in the judgment he hath executed :
The wicked one is taken in the work of his own hands.
- HIGGAION SELAH.
- 17 The wicked are turned into Hades,
And all the nations who have forgotten Elohim :
- 18 For not always shall the helpless be forgotten,
The expectation of the afflicted is not lost for ever.
- 19 Arise, O Jehovah, let not man prevail ;
Let the nations be judged in thy presence.
- 20 O Jehovah, fix thy dread upon them,^a
That the nations may know themselves to be mortal.^b
- SELAH.

^a " Oh Jehovah, appoint thou a teacher for them." HORSLEY.

^b Poor feeble men.

EXPOSITION.

Notwithstanding the laborious ingenuity of the ancient interpreters to accommodate the Psalms to the incidents and circumstances of the life of David, the true subject of this Psalm was acknowledged both by Jerome, and by the Syriac and Arabic versions. Jerome considered it to relate to Antichrist. The argument of the Psalm, according to the Syriac, is, " of Christ assuming his throne and kingdom and

vanquishing his enemy;" or, as the Arabic expresses it, "the destruction of the children of disobedience." Bishop Horsley is of opinion, that the tenth should have preceded this Psalm, as it contains a prediction of that excision of the enemy, which is here the subject of thanksgiving. The vulgate considers them as one Psalm.^c

We are to consider this song of praise, as I conceive, to be the language of our great Advocate and Mediator, "in the midst of the church giving thanks unto God;" and teaching us to anticipate by faith his great and final victory over all the adversaries of our peace temporal and spiritual, with especial reference to his assertion of his royal dignity on Zion, his holy mountain. The victory over the enemy, we find by the 4th verse, is again ascribed to the decision of divine justice, and the award of a righteous judge, who has at length resumed his tribunal. This renders it certain, that the claim preferred to the throne of the Almighty, could proceed from the lips of none but our MELCHIZEDEC.

The victory described in the 5th and 6th verses, bears so strong a resemblance to the destruction of Antichrist, as predicted in subsequent prophecies, that it is of itself sufficient to lead our thoughts to that event. We have here at the head of congregated nations, one who is called "the wicked one," the arch apostate who leads the rebel armies: they fall together in a common destruction; and fall to rise no more. The cities they inhabit leave no vestige behind. Compare this with the destruction of the fourth beast, with his "little horn," in the prophecy of Daniel, and with the destruction of the beast and the false prophet, in the vision of the Revelation, and you will perceive that both relate to the same event: and this event is followed, as this Psalm describes, by the erection of the kingdom of Christ: "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army; and the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles before

^c "According to R. Sol. Jarchi, this Psalm belongs to the time to come, to the days of the Messiah, and the future redemption by him." GILL.

him"—“these were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone, and the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse,”^d—“and the cities of the nations fell.”^e

These adversaries removed, the reign of the righteous King succeeds, as described in the 7th and 8th verses, which, from a comparison of the prophecies just referred to, we discover to be the personal reign of Christ and his saints upon earth, for the period of a thousand years, which forms the first dispensation of the Messiah’s kingdom over the whole creation, into which he visibly enters as Lord of all, and Anointed King—leaving his Father’s throne, and delivering up the rule of absolute Deity to take for ever to delegated Lordship over the works which his own hands have made, and with respect to the earth his footstool giving the first dominion to the daughter of Zion.

The 9th verse should begin a new paragraph, which is introduced to admonish the afflicted people of Christ, waiting from age to age the coming of this great event, that, during all the period of the reign of wickedness and corruption, they will find a refuge in their God; that “he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee; so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me.”

Our praises, we are told in the 11th verse, are to be directed unto Jehovah that sitteth in Zion; that is, the risen Saviour, the king who is seated at the right hand of glory, in the heavenly tabernacle, already possessed of that supreme authority, which will hereafter be displayed in the destruction of his enemies, when he literally cometh out of Zion, and which is now exercised for the preservation of his people. His persecuted servants, indeed, “fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.”^f But their blood and their sufferings cry aloud for vengeance on their persecutors. “And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, he will avenge them speedily.”^g

^d Rev. xix. 19.

^e Rev. xvi. 19.

^f Daniel xi. 33.

^g Luke xviii. 7.

In the 13th verse we have the prayer dictated to the afflicted church, the remnant of Israel especially, of the last days. They are encouraged to hope, that they shall escape from this world of sin and of triumphant wickedness, to stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, and sing to their golden harps the wonders of redemption.^b

I regard the six last verses as intended to describe the subject of these songs of the redeemed above, which we are permitted, in our feeble manner, to imitate in the courts of the Lord below until the new Jerusalem shall come down from God out of heaven, and occupy the mountain of his holiness. The song is an anticipated triumph by faith, over the fallen foe. It shows us "things not seen as yet," all the wicked turned into hell, and the long-protracted wish and prayer of the humble followers of Christ, arrived at last. In prospect of these glorious events the prayer is reiterated, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Nor can this hope cease to engage the devotion of the redeemed, whether in paradise or on earth, till the "great voices shall be heard in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."ⁱ

^b See Rev. xiv. 1, &c.

ⁱ Revelation xi. 15.

PSALM X.^a

1 **WHY** standest thou afar off, O Jehovah!
And hidest thyself in seasons of distress?

2 At the haughtiness of the wicked the humble is in anguish:¹
They are entangled in the subtleties they have devised.

^a No title is found to this Psalm in the Hebrew: the Septuagint and Vulgate join it with the preceding.

¹ Or, "Through the pride of the wicked one is the humble oppressed."

- 3 For the wicked 'one' maketh a boast^m of the desire of his soul,
And adareth gain, despising Jehovah.
- 4 The wicked, in the pride of his anger, inquireth not;
"There is no Elohim," is all his thought;ⁿ
His ways are ever confident.^o
- 5 Far are thy judgments from his sight:
As for all his enemies—he puffeth at them.
- 6 He hath said in his heart, "I shall not be moved,
From generation to generation I shall not be in adversity."^p
- 7 His mouth is full of swearing, fraud, and deceit,
Beneath his tongue are mischief and vanity;
- 8 He sitteth in ambush about the dwellings,^q
In secret places he murdereth the harmless;

His eyes are watching for the helpless;
He lieth in wait in the secret place, as a lion in covert;
- 9 He lieth in wait, that he may seize upon the humble,
He seizeth upon the humble when he hath drawn him into his
net;
- 10 He croucheth, he stoopeth, and falleth down—
The wretched^r are in his snares;
- 11 He said in his heart, "El hath forgotten,
He hath hid his face, he never saw 'it.'"

^m "Is mad upon." HORSLEY and SECKER.

ⁿ "No God, is the whole of his philosophy." HORSLEY. "All his wicked politics." MUNCZ. "He shall not regard the God of his Fathers," &c. DAN. xi. 37.

^o "יחיל דרך" Via in orbem it, i.e. curva, distorta, dolosa est. SIMON. Horsley renders as above.

^p "I am not for evil;" or "I am not he that is for evil." Some take אֲשֶׁר for a verb: "I shall go on perpetually without calamity."

^q Symmachus and Jerome certainly read thus: מֵאֲרֵב בְּחַצְרֵיהֶם מֵאֲרֵב and they both render מֵאֲרֵב as a participle: 'He sitteth prowling

about the farm-houses.' This I take to be the true rendering. The image is that of a beast of prey of the lesser order, a fox or a wolf, lying upon the watch about the farm-yards in the evening. He has his emissaries of delusion among the simplest of the people" HORSLEY.

^r "חלך חלך חלך" va'de tristis, infelix, miser, ab חלך חלך חלך niger, sed Masorethæ חל כאים q. d. turba attritorum." SIM. LEX.

^s Compare the Arabic عَصَمَ constringit, constrictum tenuit, servavit immunem. The word is used for a dog-collar.

12 Arise, Jehovah, O El, lift up thine hand ;

Forget not the afflicted :

13 Why should the wicked 'one' despise Elohim,

Saying in his heart, that thou dost not regard ?

14 Thou hast seen it ; surely before thee was the injury !

Thou beholdest the wrong to repay it with thine hand.

Upon thee the wretched casts himself :

Thou hast been the helper of the destitute.

15 The arm of the wicked one is broken :

Thou mayest search for the wicked, thou canst not find him !

16 Jehovah is king for ever and for ever—

The heathen are 'perished from off his earth.'

17 Thou hast heard the desire of the humble ;

O Jehovah, thou hast strengthened their heart ;

Thou wilt incline thine ear

To judge the destitute and afflicted ;

18 That he may no more oppress—

'He,' a mortal from the earth !^u

^t Or, "The Gentiles have disappeared from his land."

^u Or,
 "He shall not repeat it again,
 To drive man in fear from the land."
 "Never more shall man drive them in terror
 from the land."—*Fresh and Skinner.*

EXPOSITION.

We have the consent of many commentators to refer this Psalm to the times of Antichrist, or to the last great political or worldly adversary that should oppose himself to the interests of Christ's kingdom, and by subtlety or violence persecute his afflicted people. The argument of this Psalm in the Syriac is, "Of the enemy's attack upon Adam and his race, and how Christ will quell his arrogance."^{*}

^{*} "Expositors have, to little purpose, racked their invention to discover some particular occasion and literal sense of this admirable hymn: I am persuaded that its sole subject is the general oppression of the righteous by the wicked faction: that is, by the conspiracy of apostate spirits, atheists, and idolaters." *Horsley.*

The prime mover in every opposition to the kingdom of Christ, we can have no doubt, is "that old serpent" the devil or Satan; but it is intimated in various parts of the ancient Scriptures, and is particularly developed in the prophecies of Daniel, that, in the latter days, a great earthly power (by the contrivance and instigation, no doubt, of the invisible adversary) shall for many years stand up against the cause of Christ, and persecute his faithful followers. Read the description of the empire symbolized in the fourth beast in the seventh chapter of Daniel, and you have there a plain description of the great Antichrist. His hostility against the saints, it is shown, shall long be exercised or directed chiefly by a particular member of the **BEAST**, the power symbolized by his little horn: but it is the **BEAST** himself in every form of his political constitution, that is to be regarded as the principal agent of Satan in this hostility. This is the enemy chiefly designated in the Psalms by the title of רשע or the **WICKED ONE**; or "the contentious" or "rebellious one." This hostile power was in fact to continue, in some shape or other, from the first advent of the Saviour, till his second appearing to take possession of the promised kingdom.

It has proved to be the Roman empire, first under its idolatrous emperors, and next in its divided state, comprising the political powers of Southern Europe, among whom has appeared the *Papacy*, answering exactly to the description of the power symbolized by the little horn. Whether this power has had its day or not, we are still to expect that the ruling powers, the prevailing policy in the members of the Roman empire, will, in some way or other, combine against the cause of Christ and of truth.

It is, indeed, in this last state of the Roman empire, that we are to regard it chiefly as **ANTICHRIST**, or the wicked, rebellious one. Because, in this state, from the corrupt principles, the superstition, and political religion, which it upholds, we contemplate in it, more strictly speaking, a *rival Christ*, and an apostate to that religion it had once embraced. We find in the New Testament, even previous to the Revelation, such an enemy was expected. Paul designates him by the title, "man of sin," "son of perdition," "THAT

WICKED ONE.”^y St. John saw, in the interested perversions of the Gospel by worldly men, which he witnessed, the rise of this spirit of Antichrist;^z and, when speaking of the danger of loving the world, his admonition is, “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now there are many Antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time.”^a

John regards every apostate teacher as an Antichrist, though that name was hereafter to distinguish one by way of eminence. And the antichristian spirit, as this Apostle teaches us, has its very essence in the perversion of the Gospel for some worldly purpose, for gain, or interest, or human policy.

All history attests how much this principle has prevailed in what has been called the Christian world, which, geographically, has differed but little from the Roman world. This spirit has prevailed, indeed, in all the several divisions of this empire, and still prevails; yet, the See of Rome has for ages proved such a focus for the concentration of this antichristian spirit, from whence its condensed beams have been seen to act with greater force and power, that the head of that community has long been considered by the best interpreters, as “the Antichrist”—“the man of sin”—the “wicked one;”—no shadow, but the express image of the beast, claiming all the offices of the Christ of God, as prophet, priest, and king—that invisible principle of rebellion against Christ which influences the mass of society, embodied.

As the head or chief instigator of the antichristian power, he may be justly regarded so: but suspicions were long ago entertained, that the Papal head might lose its political supremacy, and come to act only a subordinate part in the councils of this divided empire, as has, in fact, been realized in our times. We must, therefore, look to the empire itself as the substance of Antichrist. The essential power is in the civil and political government, whether exercised by one or shared by many. We must, therefore, identify, in some

^y 2 Thess. ii.

^z 1 John iv. 3.

^a 1 John ii. 18.

way or other, Antichrist with the beast itself—the Roman state under all its various forms of government. And where we see the public authority in church or state exercised for the suppression, or for the corruption of the truth, and a worldly policy overrule or set aside the sacred precepts of the Word of God, we need not hesitate to say, there is the spirit of Antichrist.

It is in this long affliction of his church, that the great Advocate pleads in this Psalm: “it is written for our sakes upon whom the ends of the world are come;” and with the instructions of prophecy, we need not hesitate to say, that this corruption and persecution of the truth during the reign of the Roman Antichrist, is the most signal and remarkable opposition to the cause of Christ, that the Almighty will ever permit.

In the mysterious providence of God, for a period of 1260 years, in the last age of the world, the power symbolized by Daniel’s fourth beast, and his little horn more especially, was “to speak great words against the Most High, and to wear out the saints of the Most High, and to think to change times and laws.”^b The pride, and arrogant boast, and crooked policy of this enemy of the Gospel, is strongly marked in the Psalm; and especially the adoption of that principle, pointed out in the Epistles, that “gain is godliness.” Read the history of the Roman superstition, and remark how every sacred institution was prostituted for money, and every thing of supposed efficacy in the salvation of souls, and to the spiritual welfare of the Christian, bought and sold, in the most avowed and barefaced manner, and you have a lively comment upon what is meant by “supposing gain to be godliness;” and upon the description given in this Psalm of the covetousness and worldly policy of the wicked one.

The atheistical principle, “there is no God,” may at first sight seem incompatible with a system, whose leading character is abject superstition; and, certainly, it is inapplicable to the poor, perhaps very sincere, victims of that delu-

^b Daniel vii. 25.

sion ; but with respect to those, who, by their superior abilities or station, promote these delusions, and for their temporal emolument abuse the divine institutions of religion ; their only salvo of conscience must be, that religion is all a fabrication—"a profitable fable," as Pope Leo is reported to have said. "There is no God ;" or, "God hath forgotten—He hideth his face—he will never see." Under a like impression acts the infidel politician and legislator, denying the government of Christ over the kingdoms of men.

The 7th and four following verses contain a remote exhibition of the imposture, craft, and artful subtlety which should be employed to erect this empire of Antichrist ; and the means adopted to seduce mankind under the dominion of this spiritual tyranny, or to exterminate those who refused to submit. He was "to make war with the saints and overcome them," and "to wear them out" by long depression.

But mark the intercession of our great High Priest for the afflicted and profaned church, in the 12th and three following verses. His believing people are to unite in these supplications. It is none other than the "cry of his elect, that cry unto him day and night."

The 15th verse, to the end of the Psalm, is the anticipated victory, in the usual style of the divine songs : "The arm of the wicked is broken," &c. The reign of Jehovah follows. The Gentiles that "trod under foot the holy city," apostate and idolatrous Christians, who possessed the outward church, are extinguished for ever ; or, more literally, the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled ; Jerusalem, now delivered, is no more to be trodden under their feet. The Ancient of days is come, and judgment is given to the saints of the Most High ; "and the time is come that the saints possess the kingdom."^c—"The BEAST is taken, and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that received the mark of the beast : and them that worshipped his image, these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."^d

^c Daniel vii. 22.

^d Revelation xix. 20.

PSALM XI.*

- 1 IN Jehovah I have taken shelter :
 How can you say to my soul,
 Fly 'as' a bird 'from' your mountain?^f
 For, lo! the wicked bend their bow ;
- 2 They have fixed their arrow upon the string,
 To shoot secretly at the upright in heart ;
- 3 For the foundations are overthrown :
 What has the Just One done ?
- 4 Jehovah is in his holy habitation,
 Jehovah's tribunal is in heaven :
 His eyes behold 'the afflicted,'^g
 His eyelids examine the children of men.
- 5 Jehovah examineth the righteous and the wicked,
 And he hateth him who approveth violence.^h
- 6 He will rain upon the wicked lightning, fire, and sulphur ;
 And the hot 'wind of the desert'ⁱ shall be the portion of their
 cup :
- 7 But the righteous Jehovah loveth righteousness,
 His countenance beholdeth the upright one.

* This Psalm is ascribed to David, but without a title.

^f The versions and many MSS. have נָחַץ. They supply also the particle of similitude. נָחַץ signifies, properly, *migrat*, which affords an argument for preferring "from your mountain;" that is, quit your place of confidence where you have taken shelter. "So Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it." GILL. So also PISCATOR. See POOL's Syn.

^g "Εἰς τὸν πνεῦμα." Septuagint.

^h That is, violent and precipitate measures, such as the tempter suggested.

ⁱ זֶעַף זָעֵף *æstus vehemens*. "Psal. xi. 6, quomodo confer. quæ de ejusmodi *vento æstuum vire ardente*, Arab.

سوم dicto, et obvia quævis necante." See Simon's Lexicon.

EXPOSITION.

The Psalm now before us is evidently intended to describe some period in the conflict between the powers of

darkness, and our great Redeemer, when the cause probably of his mystical body the Church, should appear almost desperate; so much so, as to invite the taunts and insults of his triumphant enemies.

A principle of trust in a just and all-powerful God, is ever represented as the support of the Saviour's soul in all its conflicts: his ground of confidence was his own righteousness and the justice of his cause. No child of man besides can imitate him in this, except as that righteousness is imputed to him, and he is regarded in the eye of the righteous Jehovah, "as one with Christ, and Christ as one with him." But these are the blessed circumstances of the true believer; he, therefore, with his Master, may take shelter in a holy and just God from the face of all his foes—in all his "troubles and adversities, whensoever they oppress him."

The circumstance supposed to be pressed by the tempter upon the mind of our great Champion, or rather as felt in the hearts of his tempted people, is the threatening aspect of his exasperated enemies, who, disregarding all principles of right or justice, will proceed by disguised fraud to cut him off: they triumph in their supposed success in having overturned the fundamental principles of justice, on which he builds his claim, and deride the apparent ill success of the JUST ONE.

We shall remember the cruel taunts of the Jews when our blessed Lord was suspended a helpless victim upon the cross—"He saved others, himself he cannot save: if he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him: he trusted in God—let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God."^k But I conceive a future crisis in the affairs of Messiah's kingdom is more particularly in the view of the prophetic spirit, when iniquity and unbelief shall be at their height, and the enemy, blinded by his malice, shall think he has prevailed against the cause of Christ; encouraged, perhaps, by the astonishing success of his schemes in this

^k Matthew xxvii. 42. 43.

miserable world, he will begin to deride the confidence of Christ and his people in the justice of God; and in that promise, that he will cause the Just One to reign over mankind: we shall remember that an awful question has been suggested by our Lord, "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

In the 4th and 5th verses we are taught from the Saviour's lips the confidence that we are to exercise in the providence and justice of his heavenly Father, in the worst of times: even should we see the very foundations of the religion of the Gospel overthrown among men, and all things threaten the extirpation of his name; still we are to hold fast our confidence, and not be driven like the silly and frightened bird from our sure refuge. "He that believeth in him shall not make haste."

The conclusion of the Psalm, as usual, forebodes the final overthrow of Messiah's insulting foes, and his acceptance with the almighty and "only Potentate." The description of the destruction of the wicked in this passage, is exactly similar to the representation of the same catastrophe in other Scriptures, and is certainly like nothing that ever happened to the foes of the literal David. Thus, when Daniel saw in his night visions a representation of this judgment, when "the Ancient of days did sit," he observes, "His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him."—"And I beheld, then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld, even till the beast was slain and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame."¹ St. Paul tells us, "that the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."^m—"The lake of fire and brimstone," we are taught in the Revelation, receives at last all the adversaries of the WORD OF GOD."

¹ Dan. vii. 9, 10, 11.

^m 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

ⁿ Rev. xix. 20—xx. 9, 10.

PSALM XII.

- 1 SAVE, O Jehovah, for the Beloved hath failed,
For the faithful have ceased among the children of men :
- 2 They speak falsehood, each to his neighbour—
They speak with flattering lips,^o with a double heart.^p
- 3 Jehovah will cut off all flattering lips—
The tongue that speaketh proud things :
- 4 Those who have said, "We will prevail with our tongues ;^q
Our lips for us—who shall be our master?"
- 5 Because of the destruction of the afflicted, because of the sigh-
ing of the poor,^r
Now will I arise, will Jehovah say ;
I will set him in safety from him that pants after him.*
- 6 The words of Jehovah are pure words—
Silver refined in the crucible—
'Gold' seven times washed from the earth.^t
- 7 Thou, O Jehovah, wilt preserve us,^u
Thou wilt keep us for ever from this generation.^x
- 8 On every side will the wicked walk about,^y
When vileness is exalted among the children of men.

^o Smooth lips—"not smooth with flattery, but with glossing lies." See POOL.

^p Literally, "with a heart and a heart;" that is, either with a double meaning, or, as seems countenanced by what follows—"a bragging, boasting heart."

^q "We will flay the man with our tongue." HORSLEY.

^r "Cruel treatment of the helpless"—"outrage of the poor." HORSLEY.

^s That is, panteth like a savage beast, with eager desire to devour his prey—"Insufflat." Others understand differently, "him for whom the snare

is laid." "I will make him happy that was puffed at." GESEN.

^t מוֹדָרִים though sometimes applied to express the purity of silver, is more strictly an epithet of gold, from the peculiar method made use of in separating it from the soil by repeated washings and decantations.

^u Septuagint and Syriac.

^x Or "race."

^y "The impious shall be getting them out of the way—be endeavouring to escape when the scorn of the sons of men is exalted." HORSLEY. "When baseness is elevated among men, wicked men walk about on every side." DR. LEE.

EXPOSITION.

The last Psalm exhibited a period when the kingdom of Messiah should be endangered from insulting enemies openly avowing their hostility; this Psalm seems to point at the sad havoc which hypocrisy, deceit, and the seducing lies of false teachers would make among the professors of the Gospel. So low would pure religion be reduced, that, in his intercession concerning his Israel, the Beloved of the Father might seem to be left alone, and to have failed in undertaking to redeem a people out of mankind: it might seem that the gates of hell had prevailed against the church, and the race of true believers had become extinct. An outward profession, indeed, is kept up, but it is "the form of godliness" without its "power;" all is unreal and insincere—the language of religion upon their lips is the false pretence of a designing impostor.

This insidious attack upon the Gospel of Christ by false teachers, is further described in the next three verses, where their final excision is promised; and the character agrees so exactly with the description given in prophecy of the last enemies of the truth in the times of the great Antichrist, that few commentators have hesitated in its application to them. "A mouth speaking great things, great words against the Most High," is in the prophecies of Daniel a leading characteristic of one eminent branch of the antichristian power: and in the Revelation, "names of blasphemy" are seen on all "the heads of the beast," nay, finally his whole body is full of them. St. Paul observes to Timothy, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils—speaking lies in hypocrisy—having their conscience seared with a hot iron."^z

The student of prophecy will know, that all this has been shewn to predict clearly that state of things, which now for some hundred years has prevailed in the apostate churches of the Roman world.

It was also long ago foretold, that the issue of these impostures and corruptions among the teachers of Christianity,

^z 1st Epist. chap. iv. ver. 10.

would lead to a total denial of revealed religion, and to a bold avowal of atheistical principles. "Knowing this first," says St. Peter, "that there shall come in the *last* days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" Too clear a description of our own times to be mistaken.

But Jehovah ariseth in the cause of his depressed people, that remnant of true Israelites which is always in the worst of times to be found, "who sigh and cry for the abominations which are done" around them; and often fall the victims of the malice of their adversaries. These are the mystical body of Christ: in that character, a place of safety is promised to them from the adversary that pants with eager desire for their destruction.

We have a striking representation of this dispensation of Providence in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation, under the symbol of the woman that had brought forth the man child, who was persecuted by the great red dragon. "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." That is, during the period of the reign of Antichrist, when, for the most part, nothing but superstition, idolatry, hypocrisy, and infidelity is witnessed in the public profession of Christianity, still would the Lord reserve to himself a remnant in secret; concealed from public view as in the depths of the wilderness. A prophecy well illustrated by the history of pure Christianity for many ages past.

In this connexion we discover the particular meaning of the 6th verse, "The words of Jehovah are pure words," &c. For amid the various corruptions of Christianity, what has from time to time kept alive among men the spark of divine knowledge, which seemed so often overwhelmed in total darkness? We may answer, It has been the reading of the Scriptures in secret, or the meekly hearing of those portions of them retained and published in the ancient Liturgies and formularies of the Churches. By this means has a knowledge of the doctrines of grace, more precious than gold or silver, been preserved to "a poor and afflicted people" in times of the greatest darkness, when the

public profession of every Church in Christendom had in many points denied the truth, and substituted a lying superstition instead. The Word of God was the nourishment provided for the church in the wilderness; by this alone has she been preserved from the "generation" of Antichrist. These very psalms of David were songs of remembrance, "put into the mouths" of the apostate worshippers, and were a witness of God against them."^a For by the guardian care of his good Providence they were not forgotten out of the mouths of the seed of the Church, and should evil seducers wax worse and worse, and shameless profligacy be exalted, the Word of God is our only preservative.

^a Compare Deut. xxxi. 19, &c.

PSALM XIII.

- 1 How long, O Jehovah, wilt thou still forget me?^b
How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?
- 2 How long shall I lay up anxiety in my soul,
—^c Sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall the enemy exalt himself over me?
- 3 Behold, answer me, Jehovah, my Elohim,
Enlighten mine eyes, lest I sleep in death;
- 4 Lest my enemy say, "I have consumed him;"
My adversaries rejoice because I am moved.
- 5 For me, I have trusted in thy tender love,
My heart hath rejoiced in thy salvation.
- 6 I will sing unto Jehovah, for he hath rewarded me;^d
"I will hymn the name of Jehovah most high."^e

^b Houbigant renders כִּנֵּחַ "penitus"—"wilt thou utterly forget me?"

^c Some suppose עַד אֲנִי has been dropped here.

^d Our public translation renders—"hath dealt bountifully with me:" and גִּמְלָה has this meaning in Arabic

جَمَلٌ Pulchre, *benigneque et humaniter cum aliquo egit.*" Parkhurst

contends for the sense of "rewarding" in this place, and observes that Messiah is the speaker: and the notion of *retribution* very generally prevails in the use of this term in the Hebrew language.

^e The Septuagint add another line, which it is probable has been lost from the original copy: *Και ψάλω τῷ οὐνο-ματι Κυρίου τοῦ ὑψίστου.*

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm seems to be one of those that glance at the state of the Redeemer's feelings during his mournful passage through this vale of misery. His holy soul complains, in deepest distress, of the desertion and hiding of the divine countenance: he endures the displeasure of the heavenly Father against the sins of his people; for these it "pleases Jehovah to bruise him, to put him to grief." The term of his punishment appears long—a feeling common to the human mind. So heavily pass the hours of affliction: and especially when the absence of some beloved object is lamented—some expected help delayed.

Thus mourns the blessed Saviour while he stands in the sinner's place, and while, for an appointed season, the countenance of God is turned from him in displeasure. This must have been the more distressing to Christ, as his holy mind delighted, more than others, in communion with God; and could not be diverted, by the things of time and sense, from the contemplation of its loss, as our poor trifling minds are wont to be.

We read, accordingly (ver. 2), of the restless anxiety of his heart—of a care that cannot be pacified, but which sets all the thoughts of the mind at work to find out some mode of deliverance, and refuseth to be comforted till that deliverance come.

As usual in the enumeration of the Redeemer's sufferings, a fear of death, and the triumphant taunts of insulting foes, are mentioned; and such a death as he was to taste, might well create alarm, and fill his soul with terror, as we know in fact it did. His adversaries on earth triumphed in what they supposed to be their victory over him; and we may well conceive that there were circumstances of deep depression in the human soul of Christ, that afforded a malicious triumph to the powers of darkness, emboldened to their utter destruction.

Still the trust of Jesus in the divine goodness is unshaken. He "sees of the travail of his soul," and receives

the reward of his labours, and the sorrowful complaint is turned into the song of praise.

We may remark in general, on the numerous Psalms we find on this subject, that, as forming part of the public devotions of the church, they are designed for a twofold purpose.

First, as a memorial before God. The eye of the holy Majesty of heaven is always fixed upon that sacrifice which the spotless Jesus offers: it is then that God bends propitious to his people, and accepts *their* devotions: even the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart could not be accepted, because polluted and unstable in itself, except as seen in connexion with what passed in the Redeemer's breast—except as viewed in that fellowship of suffering which arises from the constituted union between Christ and the members of his mystical body, in virtue of which they are considered as one with Christ, and Christ one with them. He is the “temple that sanctifieth the gold,” the “altar that sanctifieth the gift.”

Secondly, By these divine hymns the mournful followers of Christ—whether his persecuted church among the Gentiles, or Israel at their restoration persecuted by the same antichristian powers—are encouraged to look to him for deliverance, while in his own words they pour out their complaints before him, and endeavour to imitate his trust in God: “For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them also that are tempted.”

As has been observed above, the improvement to be made by the pious mind, on the subject of these Psalms, is not merely reflection upon the goodness and faithfulness of God in helping an ancient saint, who discovers the same feelings of infirmity as we do; but here we contemplate our Champion engaged, and learn the successful issue of that contest, which, if we only judge by our own feelings, might sometimes seem undecided. We see that storm with which Satan so often threatens our peace, permitted to burst and vent all its fury on one devoted victim; so that the skirts of the spent clouds, though with still threatening aspect, pass harmlessly over our heads.

PSALM XIV.

- 1 THE wretch^f has said in his heart, "There is no Elohim."^g
 They are become corrupt—they have done abominable deeds—
 There is none that doth good.
- 2 Jehovah looked down from heaven upon the children of men,
 To see if there was any one that understood,^h
 Inquiring after Elohim.
- 3 They are all gone astrayⁱ—they are altogether corrupt;^k
 There is none that doeth good,
 Not even one.
- 4 Did not all the workers of iniquity know,
 When they devoured my people as they devour food?
 Did *they* not proclaim Jehovah's name?^l
- 5 Tremble with fear;^m for Elohim was among the righteous generation :
- 6 Ye shamed the counsel of the meek ;
 When Jehovah was his shelter.
- 7 O that the salvation of Israel were given out of Zion !
 When Jehovah restoreth his captive people,
 Jacob shall rejoice, Israel shall be glad.

^f The apostate. נָבִל a fallen, decayed, vile, contemptible, or foolish wretch.

^g The Targum paraphrases it, "there is no שׁוֹלְטָנָא *government* of God in the earth."

^h Or, "behaved himself wisely"—
 "exercised his understanding."

ⁱ Or, "turned aside"—"become apostate."

^k Or, "are become putrid"—
 "turned sour."

^l Or, "that they should not call upon Jehovah's name."

^m Or, "there were they greatly alarmed."

EXPOSITION.

St. Paul's quotation and reasoning from this Psalm in the third chapter of his Epistle to the Romans,ⁿ leave us without doubt as to its proper explanation. He is proving, that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin ; that is, not

ⁿ Ver. 10, 11, 12.

only the Heathen who had refused to retain the knowledge of the true God, and were sunk into the grossest idolatry and profligacy of manners; but also that nation, which possessed the privileges of revealed religion, and which was the professed church of God upon earth. God had, indeed, a people among them, "a remnant according to the election of grace;" but the bulk of the people were, on the whole, in view of a righteous judgment, no better than the Gentiles. The Apostle's arguments clearly show, that, independent of the quickening and sanctifying influence of the Spirit of Grace, no outward means or privileges that men possess in the church, from education, early principles or good examples, will alter the fact of the total depravity of the human heart. Nay, in the outward church, that depravity will be remarkably exposed to view, by the hatred which the carnal mind discovers to the truths of religion and to the persons of those who sincerely experience and profess them.

Fallen and wretched man, though educated under the instructions of revealed religion, secretly indulges the thought that "there is no God," or no God that regards his actions. At least he completely loses sight of this fundamental truth of religion. After all the means that have been used with them, whole generations turn out corrupt in principle and abominable in practice: the word of inspiration assures us, without one exception! God is represented as taking a scrutiny of his professed people. And this is the result—none understand or heed to understand the truth; none sincerely make use of the means to seek after God: all prove apostate and corrupt. And, as St. Paul's reasoning teaches us, this does not apply to some particular corrupt age of the Jewish church; but it is to serve as a specimen of the external church in all ages and nations—of those who are distinguished from the heathen and infidel nations around them, by the profession of revealed religion; but who are in reality strangers to the grace of God in truth, and while they possess the "form of godliness, deny its power."

These workers of iniquity, voluntarily ignorant of better

things, are charged with the merciless persecution of the children of God. And the history of the ancient church from the shedding of the blood of the righteous Abel, till its rulers demand the blood of the King of saints himself, clearly shows, how "he that was born after the flesh" in the external family of God, was ever disposed to persecute "him that was born after the Spirit." And since the establishment of the Christian church among the nations of the earth, the sincere followers of Jesus Christ have suffered far more from nominal Christians, who thought in their "deceived heart" that "they did God service" when they killed them, than from all the ancient heathen persecutors who aimed at extirpating the Christian name from the earth.

But was this an excusable ignorance? Did not these hated victims, whom they persecuted, proclaim Jehovah's name? Yes: there was in truth "a mouth and wisdom given them, that all their adversaries were unable to gainsay and resist"—their testimony was clear. But their persecutors had this world only in view; gain, not godliness, was their churchmanship. The solicitude and anxious counsels of the poor and humbled believer for the salvation of souls, was their scorn and contempt.

But though his "witnesses" must bear their testimony "in sackcloth," their Saviour will be a shelter for them. And the happy period will at length come, which has been the subject of the prayer of the Israel of God in all ages; the period when the last permitted captivity of the people of God, under the galling yoke of the spiritual Babylon, shall terminate at the appearing of the great Redeemer, who shall then come forth from Zion, and shall see all his foes made his footstool. Among his restored captives, we know also, will be the outcast nation of the Jews, who are again to be grafted into their own olive-tree. For this is the consummation to be wished for by all the remnant, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles—"what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?"^o

^o Rom. xi.

PSALM XV.

- 1 JEHOVAH! who shall abide^p in thy tabernacle?
Who shall dwell on thy holy hill?
- 2 He that hath walked in sincerity,^q and done righteousness,
And that hath spoken the truth from his heart;
- Who hath had no slander on his tongue,
- 3 Who hath done no evil to his friend,
Nor taken up a reproach^r against his neighbour.^s
- 4 In whose eyes the reprobate^t was despised,
But he would honour them that fear Jehovah:
- 5 Who hath sworn to 'his own' hurt,^u and yet would not change.
- He who hath not put out his money on usury,
Nor receiveth a gift against the innocent.
He that hath done these things shall never be moved.

^p That נָחַד applies to *perpetual residence*, see Psalm lxi. 5.

^q Or, "who walketh in perfection." He who in his course is blameless and immaculate.

^r The Septuagint render ελαβεν. We should probably render "receive a reproach."

^s The words rendered friend, and neighbour, both mean nearly the same thing: whatever persons we have intercourse with in life. The first signifies a companion or associate—the latter, a relation of any sort.

^t For the meaning of נִמְאָה see

Jer. vi. 30. It evidently means, in this place, a person destitute of the fear of God.

^u Some render this, "He is sworn to his neighbour, and changeth not." I am of opinion that our translators have given the true sense. לָחַד may be considered as a verb, "to do that which is hurtful or evil in his eyes." מָחַד may signify *to waver, prevaricate*, like the Arab. مَوَّر

"ultra citroque commota suit res et fluctuavit." שָׁחַד is used most frequently of a present, or bribe given to a judge.

EXPOSITION.

The subject of this Psalm, according to Bishop Horsley, is, "True godliness described as distinct from the ritual:" and doubtless, this should be one of the uses of this Psalm, when we apply to ourselves the example it portrays. But I think the contents of the twenty-fourth Psalm, read in connexion, afford an irrefragable proof, that the character of the good man here drawn, is not intended by the Holy Spirit, to describe the successful candidates for the divine

approbation that will be actually found among men; but to represent that demand of the law, which though it condemned all the followers of religion besides, would one day meet with a perfect exemplar among the sons of men, who should claim its promise as the reward of merit. In short, however forced the interpretation may at first sight appear, this Psalm describes the perfection and righteousness of the blessed Surety of his people. The compilers of the Liturgy of the Church of England, it should seem, thought the same, for they have selected this Psalm, with the viiith, xxiith, xxivth, xlviiith, and cviiiith, for the celebration of the ascension of our Lord.

The tabernacle and holy hill, cannot well refer to the then standing earthly sanctuary, but to those heavenly things and places of which, these were "patterns" and constituted emblems: to the new Jerusalem which is now above, but is to come down from God out of heaven, when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above the hills. The questions in the first verse—Who shall abide and dwell, or have his fixed residence in this consecrated place? are I think equivalent to the demand, Who shall permanently remain there as priest and king? for even in respect to those "who served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things," this was literally the only proper occupancy of the tabernacle and sanctuary.

We have here, then, a sketch of the character of the righteous King and Priest, whom God would "raise up from among his brethren" to sit upon his holy hill of Zion, to be "the minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man."*

He would be one who was perfectly sincere and just, whose lips were pure from falsehood—one whose heart was so fully possessed by that love which worketh no ill to his neighbour, that neither by word or deed, nor by the harbouring of any uncharitable surmise, hath he ever wronged a fellow man. In the execution of his sacred office, he is faithful and uncorrupt. One who is "true and careth for no man," however great and powerful; "for he regardeth not the person of man, but teacheth the way of

* Hebrews viii.

God in truth." One who is faithful to his engagements, though his pledge must be redeemed to his own hurt and injury; a character most requisite in one that appears as a surety of the everlasting covenant.

The next trait in the character here drawn, my reader will remark, though it is totally inapplicable to men in common life, may well enter into the description of the *perfect Priest*: "He putteth not out his money on usury." He does not employ himself in the usual business of life, in the traffic of money or of any other article. His breast is not swayed, nor his occupations in life determined, by the common principle of other men, a principle which in them, in a moderate degree, is lawful and proper (though not among the Jews with respect to a poor brother); namely, a desire to increase his substance, by carefully and industriously employing it, where the largest returns are to be made. "One ordained for men, in things pertaining unto God," must give himself wholly to his ministry; he that is set to guard the citadel, must watch and not work. The soldier of Christ Jesus, like the soldier of the state, must not "entangle himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

Paul has indeed shown, by his own example, that, compelled by necessity, an Apostle might labour with his own hands for his daily bread; but nothing can warrant in a minister of religion, the conducting of any worldly business for the sake of profit: especially that sort of traffic which fixes his attention on the world, and leads him into the society of worldly men. We may add, that for a person to enrich himself or his family out of ecclesiastical revenues, is equally inconsistent with the sacred character of a minister of the sanctuary. It was a consolation to Jeremiah, when he found himself "a man of contention to the whole land," to reflect, that the opposition to him had not arisen from any of those common occasions of dispute among men, the jarring of their respective interests in pursuit of worldly gain: "I have neither lent on usury, nor have men lent on usury to me."^y

I have dwelt the longer on this part of the character

^y Jeremiah xv. 10.

described in the text, as it seemed to me to require some explanation. The last particular, "nor receiveth a gift against the innocent," will be easily understood, when we recollect that the Jewish priest united with his peculiar functions, many duties of the magistracy.—"He that did these things should never be removed, but abide a priest continually."

We may say with St. Paul, "Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people."^z But, among all the sons of Aaron, no such priest was found: it was in the Son of God alone, that these qualifications existed. "He did no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth:" no uncharitable censure ever fell from his lips, nor was an evil surmise ever entertained in his heart. No earthly distinctions could weigh with him; and all his delight is in those, whom he hath purified for himself, to be a people zealous of good works. Who ever gave such a pledge of his faithfulness to his engagements, as He on whom, agreeably to the everlasting covenant, the iniquities of us all were laid? Yes, we know "the good shepherd," because he layeth down his life for his sheep.

Never among all the characters that have attracted the notice of mankind, can we find one so disinterested as Jesus Christ. During the first thirty years of his life, he was content to be subject to his earthly parents; and as they were poor, assisted them, there is little doubt, by his manual labours. When he entered on the duties of his public ministry, he was content to subsist on the voluntary contributions of the faithful. To the integrity of his decisions, his enemies could bear testimony. It is to him alone, therefore, that we can apply the language of another Psalm:^a "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity; therefore God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—"The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre."—"Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."^b

^z Hebrews vii. 26, 27.

^a xlv. 7.

^b Ps. cx. 4.

PSALM XVI.^c

1 PRESERVE me, O El, for I have taken shelter in thee;

2 I have said^d unto Jehovah, Thou art my Lord:

3 The benefit 'of' my 'services' is not to thee"—

To the saints that are upon earth:

Them would I glorify^f—all my delight is in them.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another;^g

I will pour out no libations of blood for them;^h

Neither will I take their names upon my lips.

5 Jehovah, thou hast assigned my portion and my cup;

It is thou that wilt maintain my lot:ⁱ

6 The lines^k have fallen to me in pleasant places;

Ay, I have a goodly heritage.^l

^c The new term in the title of this Psalm מְכַרֵּם has, as usual, given rise to various conjectures: some refer it to the music—others suppose it to mean "golden," or most excellent—others, that it imports that the Psalm was engraved in some particular manner, since the word signifies, in Jer. ii. 22, "indelibly marked."

^d All the versions, except the Chaldee, and many MSS. read אֶמְרָתִי.

^e טוֹב "Res bona, jucunda, utilis, etc.—spec. BENEFICIUM: unde Domini beneficii, i.e. quibus beneficium debetur." SIM. Lex. Heb. Prov. ii. 27. "This passage is obscure, and may be suspected of corruption. Bishop Hare would omit בְּלִי, which would make the sense, 'My goodness is [due] to thee'—"The version of the Seventy leads, I think, to an easier emendation, which will give us as good a sense: for בְּלִי עֲלֵיךְ read בְּלִי עֲלֵיךְ בְּלִי 'My goodness is of no profit to thee.' See HORSLEY.

^f Or, "These I greatly prize:" "אֶמְדִּיר pro אֶדְדִּיר. Sanctos qui in terra vivunt magni facio." Or with HORSLEY: "For the saints which are in the land, and my glorified ones, all my delight is in them." See more on this difficult passage in HORSLEY's note.

^g "A Deo ejusque cultu deflexerunt." SIMON.

^h Literally, "I will not pour out their libations of blood;" but in the ceremonial law the libation was called *his* on whose behalf it was offered.

ⁱ Or, according to many critics, "Thou wilt enlarge my lot," or "allotment." See PARKHURST.

^k The lines or cords with which land was wont to be measured.

^l מִנְחָה "A decreed portion. מִנְחָה destinavit Deus: nam Arabibus

de decretis divinis et fatis frequentatur, v. A. B. SCHULTENS ad Hist. vii. 3."

- 7 I bless Jehovah, who hath disclosed to me his counsels ;
For in the night season my heart^m instructed me.^a
- 8 I have set Jehovah ever before me ;
Because he 'is' at my right hand, I shall not be moved ;
- 9 Therefore my heart^o was glad, and my soul rejoiced :
And even my flesh shall rest in confidence.
- 10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in the abode of the dead,
Nor suffer thy Well-Beloved to see corruption.
- 11 Thou makest known to me the path of life,
Fulness of joys in thy presence—
Pleasures at thy right hand for ever.

^m Literally, "my reins."—"As common experience shows that the workings of the mind, particularly the passions of joy, grief, and fear, have a very remarkable effect on the reins, or kidneys; so, from their retired situation in the body, and their being *hid* in fat, they are often used

in Scripture to denote the most *secret working* of the soul and affections." PARKHURST.

^a יָדָע signifies not so immediately "to instruct," as "to chasten, correct, or discipline." Comp. **وَشَرَّ** *acuit*.

^o Literally, "my liver."

EXPOSITION.

Although some modern commentators obscure the opening of this Psalm by supposing that David speaks in reference to his own case; yet the sequel so exclusively belongs to Christ, that His claim to the whole can hardly be disputed. The title in the Syriac and Arabic versions has indeed marked with great discrimination the twofold subject of the Psalm, "CONCERNING THE ELECTION OF THE CHURCH, AND THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST." To which we may add from Bishop Horsley, that it is spoken in the character of High Priest; "David personates Messiah in his priestly office." And hence we discover an intimate connexion between this and the former Psalm.

The prayer of Christ, as of one who confides himself entirely to the care of the Almighty, with which the Psalm begins, we shall recollect to be the usual style of the Mediator in these sacred songs. As to his manhood, Christ was weak as we are, and needed all this support. He

acknowledges himself the servant of the Father. And it is noticed by the Apostle, as an example of great humility in the Son of God, which we ought all to imitate, that He, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no esteem, or rather, "but emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant."—"My righteous servant," is the title given to him by God, in the prophecy of Isaiah.

But what was the object of his mission and service upon earth? The Godhead could receive no advantage to itself by this wonderful dispensation. "Even," observes Bishop Horsley, "of the perfect righteousness of the man Christ Jesus, of his righteousness as a man, it may be said, with truth it ought to be said, that it was of no profit unto God. Nothing was added to the Divine Nature, by the virtue of the Man to whom the Word became united; nothing was added to his glory by his virtue; nothing was added to his happiness by his enjoyments in his exalted state. His righteousness and his exaltation are a display of the divine goodness and power, in that wonderful instance; no acquisition of goodness and power not enjoyed before."^p

The benefits of the toils and sufferings of the Son of God, and of all the services of his mediatorial office, belong to that peculiar people, that God has given to him to be redeemed by his precious blood—"the many sons" whom he is "to bring to glory." They are said to be "sanctified in God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." They are "called to be saints;" and in this character they appear on earth: persons consecrated to God, devoted to his service, and hallowed by his indwelling presence. "Whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."^q

To perfect their salvation is all the delight of Christ. This was "the joy set before him," "for which he endured the cross." He calls them his "brethren:" "both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." His

^p On the Psalms, vol. i. 185.

^q Romans viii. 30.

church is considered as his beloved spouse: "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

But a great apostacy is ever foreseen and foreboded in Scripture. Those that professed to belong to the church of Christ, would relapse into idolatry, superstition, and damnable heresy. Antichrist, that wicked one, would appear, and his image be placed, in the temple of God; and all the world, "whose names were not written in the Lamb's book of life," would "wonder after him," and receive the badges of his false religion. The Redeemer, however, renounces these. "Their spot is not the spot of his children." They, notwithstanding the name that they retain, have "fallen from grace."—"The just shall live by faith;" but if any draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in them. The great High Priest of our profession presents not on their behalf the memorial of his atoning blood.

But, in the midst of this general apostacy of nominal Jews and Christians, there hath ever been a remnant according to the election of grace. These are a portion assigned in the counsels of God, to be the reward of the Redeemer's meritorious obedience and death. With this portion, small and mean as it may sometimes seem, in the midst of the world, and even of the professing church, the Saviour declares himself pleased and satisfied—"The lincs are fallen to me in pleasant places; aye, I have a goodly heritage."

The reader will recollect, that the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah takes a similar view of this momentous subject. In the beginning of the chapter the question started is: "Who hath believed our report?" The prophet sees in the visions of future ages nothing but a rejected and despised Saviour—He seems to shed his precious blood in vain! But, no! the Spirit assures the prophet, "the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their

iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong."

How strikingly is this truth recognised in the beautiful prayer of our Lord recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel! It is truly a parallel passage: "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word."—"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." Let the reader carefully compare the passages together, and no other comment will be needed to illustrate the six first verses of this Psalm—no other proofs of the truth so little relished among men of God's election and predestination.

We have in the latter part of the Psalm a view of the comforts and encouragements afforded to the distressed mind of the Redeemer, in the midst of his almost overwhelming sorrows. The fear of death, we know, was a particular burden upon the human soul of Jesus. And we understand from the Apostle, that "he was heard in that he feared." We read also, that at the moment when his terrors seemed to have reached the utmost, the night before his suffering, "there appeared an angel from God comforting him." From the nature of the case we might argue, that the joy set before the suffering Saviour on this occasion, could be nothing else than the glorious resurrection he anticipated in the character of his people's surety, and the eternal inheritance of heavenly joy, into which he should receive all "the sheep that he had bought with his death." These dawns of hope are exactly what the following verses of the Psalm discover in the Redeemer's mind; and we who follow his steps may comfort ourselves with the same words. Being assured, by our blessed Lord, that notwithstanding

our fears and doubts, if we keep his saying we shall never see death ; but “because I live ye shall live also.”

With these corrected views of the passage before us, the reading it will be sufficient. We have only to notice how the trembling sufferer encourages himself in the Lord his God, and triumphs by faith, in him, over all his foes. “The Son of Man,” relying on the presence of God, fears not to tread the dark valley of the shadow of death, assured that when “he has overcome the sharpness of death, he shall open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.” He was, indeed, to die, as became the sinner’s surety. He prayed to the heavenly Father, that if it were possible this cup might pass from him—this, it seems, divine justice could not grant—and dreaded as were the consequences, the faithful shepherd submits to lay down his life for his sheep: “If this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.” But he received an assurance of divine preservation even in death, and of particular favours that should distinguish him among his fellows.

His body, indeed, should give up its vital spirit, and be conveyed to the grave like the bodies of other men ; but there it should be miraculously preserved from that dissolution, which returns other bodies to their dust. His soul was to descend into the unseen regions of the dead ; but it was not long to be “holden by the pains of death,” or to remain in the world of departed spirits : on the third day, it was again to reanimate the body it had left, and in it to ascend to the mansions of eternal bliss, to prepare a place for his ransomed people.

I now subjoin St. Peter’s comment upon the latter part of this Psalm, which he delivered on the day of Pentecost.

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as yourselves also know ; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain : whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death : because it was not possible, that he should be holden

of it. For David speaketh concerning him, *I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou wilt make me full of joy with thy countenance.*

“Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that *his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.*

“This Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this that ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool.* Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”^r

^r Acts ii. 29, &c.

PSALM XVII.

- 1 HEAR my just 'cause,* Jehovah; attend to my cry;
Listen to my prayer, that proceedeth not from deceitful lips.[†]
- 2 From thee let my sentence come forth,
Let thine eyes regard with equity.
- 3 Thou hast tried my heart—thou hast examined me in the night—
Thou hast proved me, and couldest find nothing.
- 4 No thoughts pass from my mouth according to the deeds of
men;
At the command of thy lips I have kept the ways of the law.[‡]
- 5 While I held[§] my footsteps in thy paths,
My feet faltered not.
- 6 I have called upon thee, for thou O El wilt answer me:
Incline thine ear unto me, and hear my words.
- 7 Glorify thy Well-beloved, making him to triumph;
Bridle^{||} the insurgents with thy right hand.
- 8 Keep me as the pupil of thine eye—
Conceal me under the shelter of thy wings,

* Jerome and Aquila seem to have read צַדִּיק "the just one," which Horsley approves. The LXX and Vulgate יָדֶק. The Vulgate, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions render it "my righteousness," meaning his righteous cause.

[†] Or, perhaps, "Hear my prayer from lips that know no deceit."

[‡] Or, "have avoided the paths of the violent." Literally, of him who maketh a breach, or breaketh down a wall or fence. In this sense the term may apply either to the great adversary or to wicked men: but פָּרִיץ is susceptible of a different translation—*law* or *statute*. A rad.

قَرَض unde قَرِضَةٌ statutum.

[§] "Infin. absol. *sustentando*." SIMON. I kept in the track without deviating or treading aside, either from my own unsteadiness, or from external violence. The most positive assertion of unsinning obedience that can well be imagined.

^{||} Or, "muzzle." I conceive we are to derive חֲסוּיִם from חָסַם and not from חָסַם as is usually done. The improved sense, and certainly the construction of the verse, will favour this interpretation. HARE and KENNICOTT would read חֲסוּיִם בְּךָ. HORSLEY confirms the rendering of חֲסוּיִם "distinguish;" i.e. separate or glorify thy Holy One.

- 9 From the face of the wicked who have assailed me *—
My enemies who have encompassed me ;
- 10 They have closed their net upon me ;[†]
They have spoken proudly with their mouths :
- 11 Now have they surrounded our paths,
They have fixed their eyes to cast us on the ground. ‡
- 12 They are like a lion that is eager for the prey,
Or like the young lion sitting in the covert.
- 13 Arise, Jehovah, thrust thyself before him, cast him down ;
Rescue me from the wicked 'one' with thy sword ;[§]
- 14 From the combinations of men, ^b with thy hand, O Jehovah ;
From the men of the world, whose portion is in this life.
- 15 Thou fillest their bellies with good things, ^c
Their children are satisfied, they lay up wealth for their babes ;
- For me, I in righteousness shall behold thy presence,
I shall be satisfied when thy likeness appeareth. ^d

* Or, "who have laid me waste." Qui vastaverunt. PAGINUS, Mi-

CHAELIS, &c. Compare שָׁד obtura-

vit, obstruxit viam. Or rather שָׁד constrinxit, formavit se, inde incurrit in prelio, impetum faciens in hostem.

† "Read with Houbigant and Kennicott (posth.) חבלמו סנרו עלי. They have closed their net upon me." HORSLEY.

‡ Or, joining דמינך to this line, "Their eyes aim at spilling our blood on the ground."

§ "Deliver my soul from the impious 'one' by thy sword." HORS-

LEY. This is confirmed by the reading of the Chaldee.

^b מַרְיָם companions, fellows, not simply men ; from מַרְיָא adfinitatem et sodalitatem invit eum aliquo.

^c The reading of the Keri seems preferable in this place צפונך ; צפורה abundantiā ut צפורה צפורה commoditas vitæ, rerum et bonorum affluentia.

^d Literally, "when thy likeness is awakened." Or with the ancient versions : "I shall be satisfied when thy glory appears."—"I shall in righteousness behold thy face ; I shall be satisfied when thy presence appeareth."

EXPOSITION.

Messiah himself is the speaker in this Psalm:^e so Jerome long since concluded: and the Arabic version has given a good idea of the subject of the sacred song, when it entitles it “A Prayer in the Person of a perfect Man, of Christ himself, and of every one that is redeemed by him.”

Christ is the suppliant; but, as usual in these Psalms, he prays as the head and Surety of his body the church, making their cause his own. He pleads his righteousness in their behalf—in their cause he combats with his deadly foes—and for their sakes, that they might be partakers of his glory, he anticipates the reward of his services.

The first six verses of the Psalm contain a most express and confident appeal to the justice of the righteous judge: right and equity are alone demanded in the cause at issue; and the language is so general and comprehensive, that it will ill apply to any particular dispute between David, or between any other saint, and his injurious enemies, against whom a partial vindication of right and integrity might be set up. Here is a claim to entire purity and complete perfection! He that seeth in secret had tried him and could find nothing. An exception from the common corruption is clearly claimed: “My thoughts pass not my lips according to the deeds of men.” A perfect and sinless obedience is, without the least scruple or hesitation, presented to the almighty Judge.

It is impossible, surely, to mistake of whom these things are said. “Christ, in the truth of our nature, was made like unto us in all things (sin only excepted), from which he was clearly void, both in his flesh and in spirit. He came to be a Lamb without spot, who, by the sacrifice of himself, once made, should take away the sins of the world: and sin, as St. John saith, was not in him. But all we the rest, although baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend

^e “It is clear that Messiah himself is the speaker in this Psalm; Bishop Horne, in his Commentaries, having put this out of doubt.” HORSLEY.

in many things; and if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”^f

The prayer in the 7th and following verses, grounded on these claims on the divine justice, may with propriety be compared to our Lord’s appeal to his holy Father, in the xviii th of John: “Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee,” &c. The whole of this prayer speaks very much the language of the Psalm before us. The blessed Jesus prays, in the prospect of his leaving his people in the midst of a world that would hate and persecute them, and who would refuse to have him to reign over them: so in the Psalm, he contemplates the insurrection of the evil doers, whose violence God’s right hand alone can bridle so as to stop their proud boasting.

Christ’s apprehensions for his own personal safety, in the days of his flesh, are no doubt to be kept in view in interpreting the language of this Psalm; but the prayer expresses also his concern for all the members of his mystical body—“the remnant of the seed,” still exposed to the adversary’s attacks when he himself should be “caught up to God and to his throne.” “Keep me as the pupil of thine eye; conceal me under the shelter of thy wings,” &c. We have next, as is usual in these divine hymns, an exhibition of the craft and policy of these adversaries of Christ and of his people, as well as of their daring violence. These enemies are specified: there is the wicked one, vulnerable, as it should seem, only by the sword of the Almighty (ver. 13), and with him the combinations of the great and wealthy of this present world: their temporal prosperity is noticed, which so often tempts the mistaken children of God to envy, when they contrast their own poverty and wretchedness with the splendour and success of these prosperous worldlings. But the celestial Advocate asks not such a portion for himself and “the children which God has given him,” but to be enabled to “present them” to his Father “faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,” in that better world “wherein dwelleth righteousness”—when “the

^f XVth Article.

tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he shall dwell with them"—“and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads.”^g

^g Rev. xxi. 3; xxii. 3, &c.

PSALM XVIII.^h

- 1 JEHOVAH ‘was’ my strength, Jehovah my rocky-cleft,
Both my fortress and refugeⁱ was my El;
- 2 My high rock whither I would flee for shelter;
My shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower.
- 3 The object of my praise would I invoke, Jehovah!
And from my enemy obtain salvation.
- 4 The waves of death^k inclosed me,
And the torrents of Belial alarmed me:
- 5 The cords of Hades had surrounded me,
And the snares of death confronted me.
- 6 In my distress I called upon Jehovah,
And cried to my Elohim.

^h Bishop Horsley has observed—“The title of this eighteenth Psalm might be thus rendered [“A Psalm”] of the Servant of Jehovah, the Beloved, who spake unto Jehovah the Words of this Song, in the Day that Jehovah delivered him from the Hand of all his Enemies, and from the Power of Hell.” The Syriac translates it, “A Thanksgiving upon the Ascension of Christ.” אֶרְצֶה I suspect belongs to the title, “And said, in tender love will I cherish thee.” For the word is applied to God alone in Scripture, and cannot, in any example, express an affection of the Protected towards the Protector, but the fostering care of the latter. The whole Psalm may be divided into five parts. Part I. consisting of the first three verses, is the poem of the song. Part

II. celebrates miraculous deliverances from a state of affliction and distress: this part consists of sixteen verses, extending from the 4th to the 19th inclusive. Part III. thanksgiving: five verses, 20—24. Part IV. celebrates success in war: eighteen verses, 25—42. Part V. the establishment of the Messiah’s kingdom: eight verses, 43—50.

ⁱ סֶלֶע generally rendered *rock*, is properly a hollow place amidst craggy rocks or rugged mountains: צִרְיָ the word used in the following line, and which is also rendered *rock*, is a sharp pointed or steep rock—“*stabat acuta silix, præcisit undique saxis.*”

^k The reading in the 22nd chapter of the second of Samuel is מוֹת מַשְׁכְּרִי, which is favoured by the parallelism.

He heard my voice from his high dwelling,¹
And my cry before him reached his ears.

7 Then the earth trembled and was shaken,
And the foundations of the mountains were moved ;
They staggered because he was wroth.

8 Smoke ascended from his nostrils,
And fire from his mouth devoured ;
Glowing cinders burned from it.^m

9 And he bowed the heavens and came down,"
And darkness was beneath his feet.

10 He rode in a chariot and flew :^o
He soared on the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness his vail^p around him—
His covering^q dense waters^r and thick clouds of the sky.

12 By the glare^s of the lightning his clouds were unfolded,
They dropped down^t the hail, with balls of fire.

13 Then, Jehovah thundered in the heavens—
The Most High uttered his voice :

¹ Or, "spacious dwelling."

^m The metaphor here is a burning furnace—to this the enraged Deity is compared : first, the rising smoke is noticed ; next, the belching flame ; and lastly, from the intenseness of the heat, *solid substances in a state of ignition* are thrown out.

^o Or, "he lowered the skies." The description seems to be that of an approaching storm : the heavy clouds with which the tempest is charged, descend lower and lower towards the earth, and, by intercepting the light of the sun, involve all beneath in darkness. Even in our climate, though we know nothing of the grandeur of the storms of more southern countries, the darkness that precedes or accompanies the thunder is sometimes very awful.

^p I cannot but incline to a suggestion of A and G in Pool—not a cherub, but a chariot. Compare Ps. civ. 3.

He made the clouds his chariot,
And went on the wings of winds.

Parallel to Hab. iii. 8—"soared," or "was borne."

^q סָרָר proprie *velo obtexit* ; and an Arabic word composed of the same written consonants, signifies "a vail"

סָרָר

^r סָרָר means a *covering* or *envelope* of any kind!—very generally a *tent* or *pavilion* ; but in this passage I conceive we are to keep in view the awning of a covered seat.

^s The reading in 2 Sam. xxii. is מִיֵּין חֲשֵׁרָת מַיִם Collections of waters—"congregated waters," as it were—"mass of waters." Houb. lxx.

^t נָחַל The splendour of the lightning, shining, as it is sometimes seen to do, among the clouds, and manifesting the distinct pillars of mist of which they are composed, taking נָחַל as a verb.

^u עָבַר signifies *to swell out*, as well as *to drop*, just as the eye forms its tears, the clouds their rain, and the exuding sap its drops of gum.

"And he sent forth his arrows and dispersed them—
He multiplied his lightnings, and poured them forth.

- 14 Then the depths of the sea^{*} were seen,
And the foundations of the habitable earth were discovered,
- 15 At thy rebuke, O Jehovah,
At the blast of the breath of thy displeasure.
- 16 He put forth his hand from above, he took me,
He drew me out of the great waters :
- 17 He delivered me from my strong enemy,
And from them that hated me, when they were prevailing
against me.
- 18 They attacked me in the day of my calamity ;[†]
But Jehovah was my support :
- 19 And he brought me out into a large place,
He delivered me because he was well pleased with me.
- 20 Jehovah rewarded me according to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands did he recompense me :
- 21 Because I had kept the ways of Jehovah,
And had not rebelled[‡] against my Elohim ;
- 22 For all his judgments were before me,
And his statutes I removed not from me.
- 23 Aye, I was perfect before him,
And kept myself from iniquity.[§]
- 24 And Jehovah hath rewarded me according to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands before his eyes.

^{*} Or, "spread them abroad." כרך ונגזלי אש The repetition of these words I think, with Lowth, to be a mistake: neither the parallel place, nor the Septuagint, nor the old Italic version, acknowledge them.

[†] Reading ים.

[‡] "Stood before me," or "confronted me." Or, "In the day of my heavy burden—the burden beneath which I stooped and was bent down." See SIMON.

[§] Here again we have that very significant word רשע so frequently

used in the Psalms, and denoting, particularly, that first rising of corruption in the heart of rebellious man, consisting of an *unquiet, restless, and refractory* spirit, ill brooking the restraints of a righteous law, and pressing to burst asunder the bands of religious fear.

^{||} The י in עוני is not necessarily the pronoun suffix: in many Hebrew words the י is certainly merely idiomatical. Or עוני may in this place be written for עונים.

- 25 With the tender thou didst show thyself tender ;
 With the perfect man thou showedst thy perfections ;^b
- 26 With the true thou showedst thyself true,^c
- 27 But with the politic thou showedst thy policy.^d
- Surely it is THOU that wilt save the afflicted people,^e
 And wilt lower the high looks !
- 28 It is thou that wilt lighten my lamp, O Jehovah ;
 My Elohim will enlighten my darkness !
- 29 Surely with thee I can break through a troop,
 And with my Elohim I can leap over a wall !
- 30 As for the El,—his way is perfect, the word of Jehovah is tried:^f
 He is a shield to all who take shelter in him.
- 31 For who is Eloah, but Jehovah ?
 Or who is a rock,^g except our Elohim ?
- 32 It was the El that girded me with strength,
 And made perfect my way.
- 33 Who made my feet like ‘ the feet ’ of the antelopes,
 And made me to stand^h upon my high places.
- 34 Who taught my hands to fight ;
 Thou didst renderⁱ mine arm a bow of brass.
- 35 And thou hast afforded me the shield of thy salvation—
 Thy right hand supporteth me, and thy aid^k hath made me
 great.

^b Or, “ With the plain, honest, simple man, thou dealest with simplicity.” Or thus, “ With the man that was perfectly or wholly with thee, thou didst show thyself to be wholly with him.”

^c Cleanness or purity, the common and leading idea of *בָּרָר* does not well apply in this place ; but we find the word used, Job xxxiii. 3, for *purity* of speech, i.e. *truth* : frequently, also, as applied to deeds, it denotes *justice*.

^d Or, “ With the crooked thou showest thyself to be *tortuous*,” or “ didst struggle.”

^e Or, “ humbled and meek.” So the parallel, which is preferred by Rosenmüller.

^f Or, “ is proof,” as metal refined with fire.

^g Or, “ Creator ” — “ Author and Protector.”

^h Or, “ gave me footing.”

ⁱ Or, “ was broken by.” *וַנִּחַרְהוּ*
 “ Ut demittatur, deprimatur, i.e. *summa vi trahatur et tendatur*.” SIM. Lex. Heb.

^k Or, “ thy help afforded me:” for *עֲנָה* signifies, not only to *afflict* and *humble*, but also to be *rich*, to be *sufficient*—“ Et transitive sc *divitem et sufficientem*”

- 36 Thou hast widened my steps beneath me,
And my feet have not faltered.
- 37 I will pursue mine enemies and overtake them,
And turn not back till they are consumed :
- 38 I will stamp them to the ground, that they cannot rise ;
They shall fall beneath my feet.
- 39 For thou hast girded me with strength for the battle :
Those who rise up against me thou makest to bend beneath me.
- 40 Thou wilt give me the necks of mine enemies,
I shall cut off those who hate me.
- 41 They may cry, but there is none to save—
Unto Jehovah, but he will not answer them.
- 42 And I shall beat them small as dust before the wind,
I shall tread them down like the dirt of the street.
- 43 Thou wilt deliver me from the strivings of the people,
Thou wilt appoint me the head of the nations.
- 44 A people whom I knew not, shall submit themselves to me :
With the hearing of the ear shall they hearken unto me.
- 45 The sons of the stranger will dissemble with me ;¹
The sons of the stranger will fall off.^m
They shall come in terror from their strong holds.ⁿ
- 46 Jehovah liveth ; and blessed be my rock,
Exalted be the Eloah^o of my salvation.
- 47 It is El that hath avenged me,
And hath subdued the nations beneath me,
Delivering me from mine enemy.

præbuit alteri." Thus the Arabic غني signifies, in one of its conjugations, *to bestow care or pains upon any thing ;* and غني signifies *to enrich, to profit another*. Bishop Horsley renders, "thy humiliation," i. e. the humiliation laid upon me by thy providence.

¹ "Lie to me"—"prove false and

deny me."

^m "Like a withered leaf—will act foolishly, basely, and wickedly."

ⁿ Compare Daniel xi. 39. "They shall come trembling from their strong holds, as places not able to protect them, therefore they shall sue for peace." BISHOP HORNE. פחדו בך בן אדם. ut Arab.

خرج

^o Fifty-nine MSS. have אלהי.

- 48 Thou hast set me up above them that rise up against me,
 Thou hast delivered me from the man of violence :
- 49 Therefore will I celebrate thee among the nations,
 O Jehovah ! and I will sing of thy name :
- 50 Rendering great the triumphs of the king,
 And shewing kindness to his anointed,
 To David, and to his seed for ever.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm so evidently concerns the great Redeemer, that I cannot but incline to their opinion who refer it primarily, not to David's victories over Saul, but to the conflict of the *Beloved* of the Father over hell and the enemies of his spiritual kingdom. Supposing the occasion imagined in the common translation of the title prefixed, it would only serve to show how little the Spirit of Inspiration confined himself to these circumstances, how immediately we lose sight of David and his victorious followers, and are enwrapt in the future scenes of Messiah's everlasting kingdom. Or perhaps this Psalm previously composed was used on this occasion, David's victories being contemplated as types and pledges of the greater victories of the Son of David. The Psalm before us contains within it the usual and most unequivocal proof that it belongs to Christ; viz. that a demand is made, by the Psalmist, upon the divine justice and interposition, solely upon the grounds of unsullied purity and perfect obedience to his will. In addition to this proof, two passages are cited from this Psalm in the New Testament, and applied to Christ: the 2d verse in Heb. ii. 13, and the 49th in Rom. xv. 9.

The Psalm opens with a grateful acknowledgment and profession of the highest trust and confidence in God. The emphatic expression in the first line, (if it indeed forms part of the text of the Psalm) was, perhaps, never more forcibly rendered than in our old versified translation of the Psalms :

“ O God, my strength and fortitude, of force I must love thee.”

though on consideration I much prefer a meaning suggested by Buxtorf and others—(see the note upon the first line of the Psalm.)

We have before been led to remark of our blessed Lord, that we have in him, in the days of his flesh, a complete example of trust and confidence in the Almighty protection. Made weak as we are, and in a certain sense destitute of help, he confided his cause entirely to the justice and goodness of God. St. Paul, in the 2d of Hebrews, where he cites the 2d verse of this Psalm, is speaking of “Jesus made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death.” He describes him as being “made perfect through sufferings,” while, as “the Captain of their salvation,” he is “bringing many sons to glory.”

Contemplated in this point of view, he is as one of us in relation to our God and Father; for he had “emptied himself, and taken upon him the form of a servant;”—“for both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying (in the 22d Psalm), ‘I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee:’ and again (in the Psalm before us), ‘*I will put my trust in him.*”^p

This is a key to the meaning of the Psalm. Trust certainly implies weakness in the party exercising the trust; and the sense of danger and helplessness in fleeing to another for shelter. There is, perhaps, nothing more difficult, until we are well versed in comparing spiritual things with spiritual, than to reconcile this notion with that of the divinity of the incarnate Son of God. Impressed with a full sense of his divine majesty and glory, we are ready, with Peter, to rebuke, as it were, our suffering Lord, when he speaks, in the Psalms, the language of a depressed and helpless man: “Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee.”^q But to believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ—so to believe it, as that it may afford

^p The Apostle's words are, “*Εγω εσομαι πεποιθως επ' αυτον,*” which are the very words of the Septuagint version in the copy of this Psalm found in 2 Sam. xxii.

^q Matthew xvi. 22.

ground for the erecting of the confidence of a poor helpless sinner on Him that sanctifieth, we must see the *true humanity* of Christ—without sin, indeed, but with all the misery and wretchedness to which sin had reduced human nature. In such circumstances it was that Christ entered the lists with our spiritual foes, and wrought that everlasting righteousness which is imputed to us in justification, and which, through a spiritual union, emanates upon us from his glorified person in our sanctification.

The Psalm before us is a song of praise, expressive of the gratitude of the Redeemer's soul for the divine assistance afforded to him in the conflict he had sustained for the redemption of his people: and it is surely a song that we may sing in the house of the Lord all the days of our life; for the fruits of the dreadful conflict are ours, and we are sharers in the glorious victory which is celebrated.

In the 4th and 5th verses we have a particular statement of the circumstances of the apprehended danger from which the deliverance had been given; and these verses evidently represent the Redeemer's soul sinking in the agonies of death, and overwhelmed with its bitterness amidst the dreadful fears of the desertion of God's countenance. This is a subject often brought before us; and there was certainly something so terrible in the death which our gracious Master suffered for our sins, that it exceeds every conception that we can form. The toil was not small to redeem lost sinners!

The 6th verse represents the Saviour calling upon God in his distress—we are to reckon these among his strong cries and entreaties which he, in the days of his flesh, poured out unto Him that was able to save him from death: and though the cup did not pass from him, yet we are expressly told, that, as to some circumstances of his dreadful apprehension, "he was heard in that he feared:" moreover the language of the Psalm seems to carry our thoughts further—to the separated spirit of the Holy victim lying in darkness, and in the deep, and in the nethermost pit, as prefigured in his type—Jonah. "I cried by reason of mine affliction

unto the Lord, and he heard me ; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.”^r

Hence, we seem to discover, that the mind of our blessed Lord had not that consolation which, from his superior wisdom, we might have imagined,—that he knew the worst he had to endure ; so that no alarming fears, nor distorted views of unexplored terrors, could ruffle his calm composure in death. The case, it appears, was far otherwise. It was “the hour of the prince of darkness ;” and no doubt the tempter was permitted to harass our Lord with tormenting fears as much as it was possible for a human soul, delivered up entirely into his hands, to be made to suffer : and there is not a pang of distress, or agony of horrid amazement, which the mind of man, in any circumstance whatsoever, may possibly endure from the disorganization of a diseased body, or from whatever other cause, which may not be referred to as an instance of what Satan could do when he had full power to do his worst.

There was then a dreadful moment ; but, divine justice satisfied, the cries of the sufferer are heard.

From the 7th to the 19th verse inclusive, we have a most magnificent description of the divine Being coming to the aid of the suffering Jesus, and rescuing him from his insulting and triumphing foes. The description of this interposition of the Almighty is as grand as the figures of creation can possibly make it. The trembling earth, the appearance of the angry Deity, the storms and tempests of the lowering sky, the unnatural darkness, the dispersed lightnings, and loud thunders, are all truly sublime, and are calculated to make us feel what “the strong enemy” of Jesus felt at that hour—“O Lord God Almighty, who is like unto thee, who can stand before thee when thou art angry ?”

All this pertains “to things not seen,” and of which the things we witness are only faint emblems ; but we read that at the time when Jesus gave up the ghost, and sunk into the bands of death ; even visible nature gave indications of what

^r Jonah ii. 2.

was passing. We read, "And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour."—"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost, exclaiming with a loud voice, 'Into thy hands I commit my spirit:' and behold the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened," &c.

In the part of the Psalm that follows, from the 20th to the 26th verse, the rescued sufferer hesitates not, in the most unequivocal language, to ascribe that deliverance to his own merits and perfections: and this language is common in the Psalms, and as often as we meet with it, impels us to exclaim, To whom can this possibly belong, but to the "HOLY ONE OF GOD"—"who, though he had done no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification?"

This victory of our great Champion over the prince of darkness, who held captive his afflicted people, is next represented in verses the 29th to 42d inclusive. Here we learn how, "through death, he destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."^s We read in this figurative language, how, bursting the bands of death, the risen Saviour "spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them."^t

Of the same conflict we read in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation of St. John: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out

^s Heb. ii. 14, &c.

^t Col. ii. 15.

into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Nor is the earth long to afford a shelter for the fallen foe; the victorious Redeemer will pursue his conquest till all the combined powers of earth and hell fall prostrate beneath his feet.

From the 43d to the 48th verse, we have a picture of all the earth submitting itself to the sceptre of the anointed King: his kingdom, however, still meets with opposition—the great apostacy is again plainly foretold, and the manifestation of the great Antichrist: at length the cause of the Redeemer triumphs over all.

In the three first verses of this last portion of the Psalm, the rise of Christ's kingdom, notwithstanding the gainsaying and opposition of the Jews, is evidently portrayed. The same despised Galilean whom they crucified, becomes the acknowledged object of worship among the great Gentile nations. All this was the effect of the preaching of the Gospel: "With the hearing of the ear they hear concerning me." But the language of the prophet seems to forebode the suspicious nature of this submission of "the sons of the stranger;" and an acknowledgment of the divine help immediately follows, in a final struggle with these same nations, become apostates and revolters, under the guidance of one who is called the *man of violence*; by whom, no doubt, is meant the Antichristian power of the last ages. He is an instrument in God's hands to destroy the strongholds of the apostates, but himself combines the kings of the whole earth against Messiah.

This is the victory symbolized in the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood! And his name is called the word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite

the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron : and he treadeth the wine-press of the wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun ; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God ; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse and against his army. And the BEAST was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth : and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, &c.”^u

^u Rev. xix. 11, &c.

PSALM XIX.*

- 1 THE heavens declare the glory of El,
And the firmament showeth the work of his hands.
- 2 Day after day language is poured forth,
And night after night knowledge is conveyed.
- 3 There is no speech, there are no words;
No voice is heard among them.
- 4 'Yet' their call^y goeth forth to all the earth,
And their signals^z to the end of the habitable land.
- 5 He hath placed in them a tent^a for the sun;
And he coming forth^b like a bridegroom from his nuptial chamber,^c

* The title found to this Psalm is the usual one למנצח מזמור לדוד
^y "Their call." יך sec. nonnul.

clamor coll. Arab. قوقا i. e. صاح
 clamavit propr. vox ex sono ficta et
 gallinis propria, unde nova rad. قرة
 clamare ita, ut alter alteri respondeat
 voce mutis agnita—"vel a קן filium
 fidis loco adhiberi solitum—unde pri-
 mum sonus fidium deinde sonum in
 universum." SIM. Lex. Heb.

^z Or, "apophthegms." Kennicott
 observes that מלל signifies to indicate
 or make signs. Prov. vi. 13. "He
 speaketh with his feet." Maketh dumb
 signs, as it would be familiarly ex-
 pressed.

^a אהל signifies, properly, the
 covering of the tent. The allusions I
 conceive to be to the tabernacle in
 the midst of the Jewish camp, where
 the glory of Jehovah rested. Mr.
 Parkhurst explains this passage. "In
 them, the heavens, hath he set a tent
 or tabernacle for the solar light,
 namely, the orb or body of the sun
 fixed like a tabernacle in the centre."
 But I should rather suppose the allu-
 sion is to the appearances of the hea-
 venly bodies: the sun seems to retire
 to his tent in the evening, and issue
 thence in the morning, according to
 the poetical fiction of all nations.

The waves of the western ocean might
 be imagined to be the curtains of the
 tent, behind which he withdrew him-
 self from the sight of men. His ap-
 pearance again from the east, from
 the splendour of his rising, might be
 compared to leaving the apartment
 of a bride.

^b יצא like the Arab. رضى sig-
 nifies, properly, to glitter, to sparkle,
 to shine: thus in Job xxx, 10, it
 should be, When I am tried I shall
 sparkle as gold. And ch. xx. 25, The
 sword glittereth from its scabbard.
 It is used of the rising sun, Gen. xix.
 23; of the sun shining in full splen-
 dour, Judges v. 31; of the appearing
 stars, Neh. iv. 21. The comparison
 in this beautiful passage is not to a
 bridegroom's merely coming out of his
 bridal chamber, but to the splendour
 and glittering appearance of his dress,
 as he shines before all others in the
 nuptial procession. "Go forth, O
 daughters of Zion, and see king Solo-
 mon in the crown wherewith his mo-
 ther has crowned him in the day of his
 espousals, in the day of the gladness
 of his heart."

^c חפץ Obtectio, protectio. Thala-
 mus nuptialis, vel umbraculum, vel
 lectus, quo sponsus et sponsa circum-
 dantur, teguntur. Joel ii. 16, has
 given the proper meaning.

Exulteth^d like a strong man to run 'his' journey ;^e

6 His going forth^f is from the end of the heavens,
And his circuit to their extremities ;
And there is nothing screened from his heat.

7 The law^g of Jehovah is perfect,
Restoring the soul ;
The instruction of Jehovah is sure,
Making wise the simple.

8 The commandments of Jehovah are right,^h
Rejoicing the heart ;
The precept of Jehovah is clear,
Enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of Jehovah is pure,
Standing for ever ;
The judgments of Jehovah are true,
They are righteous altogether ;

^d שוש "To be *brisk, active, sprightly*. It is spoken of the Arabian war-horse, Job xxxix. 21, where the LXX. excellently render γαυγῆς, a word expressive of joy mingled with pride." PARKHURST. The Arabic

شاس denotes the look of proud contempt. The allusion to the *giant* and *race* in our translations is certainly unfortunate: the allusion is to the briskness, the eagerness, the confident joy which a powerful man feels, who is ready to start as a *courier* on some journey on which he is despatched.

^e ארח is certainly a *journey*, a *way*, a *road*: and the רצים or αἰνῆνες, were the well-known attendants of the ancient kings and generals: "Satellites, ad mandata celerrimo cursu deforenda adhihito." It was a term particularly applied to the Persian letter-carriers or posts. "These," says Parkhurst, "were none other than the Angari, instituted by Cyrus for the purpose of speedily conveying letters and intelligence. See Xenophon. Cyropæd. lib. viii. Herodotus, lib. viii." ארחו *His* journey is the reading of the LXX. and Syriac.

^f Or, "At the end of the heavens is his shining forth, and his circuit

from end to end." תקופה is more properly, I think, the return of a point in a circling sphere, marking a complete revolution, than the circuit itself. 'قانی' *ambire nexu in se redeunte*."

^g All the terms here made use of, are to be understood of the whole revealed will of God, contrasted with that knowledge of the Deity which was taught by the works of nature. רורח the first term used, is often applied to the revealed law or code in general. Its primitive signification is supposed to be, instructing a person to whirl the dart. עדות is often applied to the testimony of a witness; its ideal meaning is to *repeat again and again*. פקודים are the commands or things given in charge by the inspector, visitor, or superintendent. Visitations or inspections, *care, concern*, or interference in the concerns of others, of those, more properly, submitted to our care or power. מצות are the ordinances, or dispositions of a superior. משפטים, sentences, judgments, or *decisions*.

^h אשר ut ישר *felix, prosper* fuit. The word in Arabic means both equity and opulence.

- 10 They are more to be desired than gold,
Even than much 'native' gold;
And they are sweeter than honey,
Even than the droppings of the comb.
- 11 Thy servant also shines amidst these;
In their observance is 'his' great career.¹
- 12 Who can distinguish 'occasions of' error?
From concealed ones do thou keep me clear.
- 13 Also from the presumptuous² keep back thy servant;
Let them not have dominion over me.
- Then shall I stand apart,¹
And be innocent from the great rebellion;
- 14 The words of my mouth shall be an acceptable offering,
And the meditation of my heart in thy presence,
O Jehovah, my framer^m and my deliverer.

¹ נִזְקָר, frequently to be *admonished*, but properly to be illuminated or filled with light. The meaning may be—"From revelation and not from the works of nature, the servant of Jehovah is enlightened or instructed." But, I am rather disposed to think that the allusion is to the sun amidst the heavens, going on his shining course, from one end to another: so, in his appointed orbit, the paths of God's commandment, the SERVANT OF GOD continues his brilliant career.—Comp. Dan. xii. 3. "Coruscet," HAMMOND. עֵקֶב literally the *heel*, or the *print* of a heel; hence a *track*. It signifies also the *end* of a thing, and hence a *reward*.

² זָדִים, literally, *presumptuous*. The exact idea of this term may be discovered in Deut. xviii. 22: it is the doing a thing without being told or

authorized. Both the Septuagint and Vulgate seem to have read זָרִים *strangers*. Bishop Horsley, as appears by his fragment, understood by זָדִים "evil spirits."—"Keep me from hypocrisy, and from the suggestions and enticements of evil spirits," &c. or, deliver me from my insulting oppressors. "The proud had me exceedingly in derision."

¹ The reading of the text is אֵתֶם which has all the support it can have, except a few private MSS. This word cannot be from תָּם to be *perfect*; we must therefore have recourse to the root יָרַם which is still extant as a verb in the Arabian language, where it signifies "singularis"—"unicus"—"parem non habens." SIMONS accordingly renders, "solitarius vivam."
^m Or, "rock."

EXPOSITION.

We are bid, in the opening of this Psalm, to remark the testimonies which creation, and especially the revolution of the heavenly bodies, bear to the glory and power of God.

Without the faculty of speech, these celestial bodies, so immense, so glorious in their circling orbits, bringing in regular succession the vicissitudes of day and night, and the seasons of the returning year—without the faculty of speech, they hold a language intelligible by all—"The hand that made us is divine."

The believer in Christ cannot too much extend his views to the wonders of creation, that he may learn to magnify God in his thoughts; and to trust in the mighty arm of Him who created the heavens and earth, and appointed the ordinances of heaven by his irreversible decree. The Apostle also has told us, that the excellency of contrivance and power, displayed to all men in the works of nature, has rendered that idolatry, to which fallen man has ever been prone, inexcusable in the view of reason and of a judgment to come. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse: because, that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful."ⁿ One object is in particular pointed out, as pre-eminent amid the heavenly bodies; the sun shining in his strength. His beauteous appearance, and the promptitude with which he seems to resume from day to day his unwearied course, are celebrated in the figurative language of the Psalm. The extensive range of his circuit, and his genial warmth pervading and penetrating the spacious earth, are also noticed.

We have next, verse 7th, a transition so sudden to what appears to be a new subject, that it has induced some critics to conjecture that a new Psalm commences in this place. But the fact is, that a parallel is intended to be drawn between the glorious attributes of God manifested in creation, and those attributes more glorious still, manifested in revelation. And, our attention is then fixed by the pro-

ⁿ Romans i. 19, &c.

phetic Spirit, on that GREAT MINISTER of Jehovah, who occupies the same station in the moral and spiritual world, that the sun does in the mundane system.

The works of nature, the heavenly bodies especially, discover the great power and wisdom and the general munificence of that Being, "who causeth his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust"—"who doeth good to the unthankful, not leaving himself without witness," but convicting man of his ingratitude in his rebellion, by "sending him fruitful seasons, and filling his heart with joy and gladness." So far, the works and operations of visible nature declare God to man. But if fallen man is awakened from his moral death, and begins to feel his awful situation as a lost sinner, and his conscience, by the hidden wisdom of divine instruction, is "convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," there is nothing in the works of nature, that can teach his anxious soul what he longs to know concerning his God. The starry heavens cannot guide him in the course of mercy and grace; nor can the rising sun diffuse upon his benighted soul the light of life: concerning the work of redemption nature is silent.

But, in revelation there is a living word; and "the sound" of its preachers is to go "into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world."^o The declaration of this word, when it comes with power to the sinner's heart, "restoreth the soul," "maketh wise the simple," "rejoiceth the heart," "enlighteneth the eyes." The true fear of God is taught, whom to know, is life eternal. His true and righteous judgments, in relation to the salvation of fallen man, are manifested, "more precious than gold" in the awakened sinner's estimation, and affording more enjoyment, and sweeter relish to his soul, than all the delights of nature to his natural appetite.

In this new creation, also, there ariseth a brighter sun than that which in the material heavens glittereth from his chariot, and exulteth like the well-prepared courier to run

^o Romans x. 18.

on his appointed errand. "The sun of righteousness ariseth with healing in his wings." As David says, in his "last words," respecting "the delightful theme" of the Psalms of Israel, "And he shall be like the morning light at the rising of the sun—a morning that dawneth without clouds."^p And Jerusalem is addressed by the Prophet Isaiah, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee: for, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."^q In the language of the New Testament, his appearance is hailed as "the day-spring from on high"—"giving light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the way of peace"^r—"a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Israel"^s—"In him was life, and the life was the light of men."^t To quote no more but the declaration of our divine Master himself: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."^u

The unremitting course of the sun through his appointed orbit, "from one end of heaven to the other," diffusing warmth and genial influence on all things, is the last phenomenon of the heavens that is noticed in the former part of the Psalm: and this also is pointed out as symbolical of the sun in the spiritual world, who is the great MINISTER or servant of the Father, as the word sun שמש primarily signifies in the Hebrew language.^x

As this great luminary seems to pursue his unwearied course through the constellations of heaven, and from his unexhausted stores communicates light and vital heat to all this lower world: so, in the ways of God's holy law, and in the paths of his commandments, the servant of Jehovah, fulfilling all his judgments, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness, proceeds on his destined career of moral obedience and of spiritual conflict. In this course he shines

^p 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.

^q Isa. lx. 1, 2.

^r Luke i. 78, 79.

^s Luke, ii. 32.

^t John, i. 4.

^u John viii. 12.

^x Vid. Simonis Lex.

upon the objects of his influence: in the observance of these laws is his great career; or, if the usual rendering be preferred, the great reward which he is to earn—"the end of his labours;" that he may accomplish in the new creation what the sun does by his circuits in the visible world; "that the heavens may drop down from above, and the skies pour down righteousness; that the earth may open, that they may bring forth salvation, and that righteousness may spring up together."^y—"Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up like the calves of the stall."^z

The three last verses contain the prayer of our divine Master, as the "Son of Man" entering upon his destined course of perfect obedience: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." The human soul of the blessed Jesus was, we know, spotless and pure, immoveable in the hour of trial, uncontaminated in the various temptations with which it was assaulted, and victorious in every conflict; yet, in some respects, he had "to learn obedience by the things that he suffered." In that his nature was really and perfectly human; though in a sinless state, there was a weakness essential to it, that needed the divine instruction and support. If this had not been the case, our SURETY could not have been said "to grow in wisdom," and to be "strengthened from heaven."

A human being, possessing all the sinless perfection and integrity of principle of which his nature is capable, on entering some great course of duty, could feel no apprehension from those usual causes which are perpetually di-

^y Isaiah xlv. 8.

^z Mal. iv. 2. "From a citation which St. Paul has made of the fourth verse, it appears that, in the exposition of this Psalm, we are to raise our thoughts from things natural to things spiritual—we are to contemplate the publication of the Gospel, the manifestation of the Light of life, the Sun of righteousness, and the efficacy of evangelical doctrine. In this view the ancients have considered the Psalm, and the church has therefore appointed it to be read on Christmas-day." BISHOP HORNE. Compare "then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," and Dan. xii. 3, "and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

verting the depraved and corrupt from the path of holy obedience. Such a being would feel, from these common sources of human frailty, no apprehension of offending the will of his superior; yet, if we reflect, we find two sources of error and transgression still remain, from whence the purest being might possibly be led to deviate from the line of perfect obedience—possibly, if you consider him in himself; but the possibility is destroyed, if you suppose his holy prayer to be heard, and the Deity pledged to his support.

These “occasions of error” are pointed out in the language of the Psalm:—“concealed ones,” where, with the best intentions, we fall into mistakes, and are led to offend against the will of the Lawgiver: and again,—“presumptions,” into which, if the term will bear that meaning, a man may be betrayed in a matter where he is pure in intention: from warmth of affection, for instance, or from fervency of zeal (“swelling” or “boiling up” is the ideal meaning), he is moved to do that which the strictness of his instructions does not warrant. Guarded from these errors, the holy Jesus contemplates an undeviating course of perfect obedience: “Yea, thy law is in my heart, I am content to do it.” He will then, though truly a man like other men, stand alone, an exception in the universal guilt of the human race, and be found alone faithful in the general defection of his kind: so will the words of his mouth, spoken from the abundance of his pure and holy heart, and all the thoughts and reflections of his inmost soul, be meet to be offered as a sacrifice to the holy God, whom he acknowledges as the maker of his frame, his constitutor, as it were, and his pledged deliverer in all his dangers and distresses. Or, having in view the incidents of our Lord’s life, we may thus apply the terms, “keep me clear from the hypocrites who lay snares for me, and try to catch me in their talk, that they may deliver me into the power of the governors, and when I stand before these proud insolent rulers, resolving to hold my mouth as it were with a bridle, let not their insolence make me break my firm resolve.”

Thus are we instructed to form our notions of that spotless Lamb, who was not only made as a sin-offering for us,

but whose righteous soul was offered upon the altar as a whole burnt offering for us, that he might "bring in an everlasting righteousness," and become "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth:" and while they follow his footsteps, let the disciples of Jesus remember, that even in those things where they may be said, in a manner, to have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, and can act in any business upon comparatively pure principles, yet these occasions of error, ignorance, and presumption, are to be apprehended, and made the objects of earnest prayer. Many, too, will be the concealed snares artfully laid in their path—great may be their dangers from the insolent treatment of proud oppressors.

PSALM XX.^a

- 1 JEHOVAH will hear thee in the day of affliction,^b
The name of the Elohim of Jacob will lift thee up;
- 2 Will send thee help from the holy place,
And support thee from Zion:
- 3 Will remember all thy offerings,
And accept^c thy burnt sacrifice.
SELAH.
- 4 He will grant thee according to thy desire,
And accomplish all thy counsels.
- 5 We shall triumph in thy victory,^d
And in the name of our Elohim wave our banners:
- 6 Jehovah will fulfil all thy requests. Now I know
Because Jehovah is the Saviour of his Anointed,

^a The title of this Psalm is the usual one, **לְמַנְצָח מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד**

^b "From the hostilities of a foe especially."

^c "He reduceth to ashes," "the fire from heaven consumes," the particular mark of the divine acceptance; but Kennicott, "Et hostiæ tuæ sint pin-

gues, sic gratas habeat, tanquam si pinguissimæ essent."

^d **יִשְׁעֵי** commonly translated salvation, in the original language signifies, as has been before remarked, not merely preservation or deliverance from danger, but a triumphant issue to any undertaking or conflict.

He will answer him from his holy heavens—
In mighty deeds 'is' the victory* of his right hand.

7 Some 'boast' in chariots, and some in horses,
But we will boast in the name of Jehovah our God.

8 They bent down, and are fallen ;
But we stood firm, and are unbroken.^f

9 O Jehovah, give the victory to the king :
May he hear us in the day of our calling.

* "שָׁעַ" is a noun substantive, the subject of the verb substantive under- stood."
^f "Numeratos nos stetimus." SIMON.

EXPOSITION.

The title which Bishop Horsley gives to this Psalm, "The Church's Trust in the Protection of the Messiah," seems sufficiently well to suit its general contents.^g The Psalm begins, as has been generally supposed, with prayer on his account, but, as I rather incline to think, with the answer of the divine Oracle to him : and I conceive we may discover a connexion between the contents of this and of the former Psalms: there the GREAT MINISTER of the Father, who is to accomplish all his will, anticipating the days of his humiliation, prays for divine help and assistance that he may accomplish a perfect obedience to his will, and offer to him an acceptable sacrifice. This prayer is answered : Jehovah will hear, &c.—he accepts the offering—he grants thee the request of thy lips.

In the prospect of the acceptance of their Surety, and in the victory vouchsafed to the great Captain of their salvation, the hosts of God's elect celebrate a triumph. Ver. 5.

Lastly, The triumphant shouts of his armies, contained in the three last verses, exhibiting a contrast between their own happy condition and the situation of the fallen foe, must, as usual, be understood to embrace the view of the final overthrow of the enemies of Christ, in the day of his

^g See Ainsworth in Pool.

appearing and kingdom. When we sing this Psalm, we anticipate this great and final victory of our Redeemer, not leaving out of sight, however, his first victories over the powers of darkness and their suborned agents, in his death and passion.

PSALM XXI.^b

- 1 O JEHOVAH, the king shall rejoice in thy strength,
How much shall he exult in the victory thou 'givest'!
- 2 Thou hast granted him the desire of his heart,
And hast not withholden the request of his lips.
SELAH.
- 3 For thou wilt meetⁱ him with blessings of prosperity,
And put a crown of pure gold upon his head.
- 4 He asked of thee life—thou gavest it him;
Lengthening of days^k for ever and ever.
- 5 His glory is great in the victory thou 'givest,'
Honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him;
- 6 For thou hast decreed him blessings for ever,
And hast gladdened him with joy in thy presence:^l
- 7 For the king hath trusted in Jehovah,
And through the tender love of the Most High he shall not be moved.
- 8 Thy hand shall reach all thine enemies,
Thy right hand shall reach them that hate thee.
- 9 Thou shalt put them in a furnace of fire
At the time of thine appearing;
Jehovah shall swallow them up in his wrath,
And the fire shall consume them.

^b Title למנצח מזמור דוד

ⁱ "Preventest," or "anticipatest."

^k "Or, 'the extent of days.' I suspect that ארך ימים is a phrase for the whole extent of infinite duration." BISHOP HORSLEY.

^l "Thou hast gladdened him with the joy (that is) with thy presence: i.e. with thyself: according to the frequent import of פני. See Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15." BISHOP HORSLEY.

- 10 Their fruit shall perish from the earth,
 And their seed from among the children of men.
- 11 When they designed evil^m against thee,
 They formed a plan that they could not effect ;
- 12 Then thou wilt set them as a targetⁿ—
 Thou preparest thy bow-string before their faces.
- Arise, O Jehovah, in thy strength,
 And we will sing and laud thy might.

^m Or, "aimed mischief."

ⁿ "A but." AINSWORTH. "Thou shalt take a steady aim against them. I take כִּיכֶנֶךְ to be a technical term of archery, to express the act of taking aim at a particular object. See Psalm vii. 13." HORSLEY. There is in this

passage a contrast between the clandestine mode of the attack of Messiah's enemies, with the futility of that attack ; and the open, deliberate, and certain vengeance of the Almighty Conqueror.

EXPOSITION.

The character of this Psalm can hardly be mistaken. The allusion is so plain and the subject so exclusively belonging to the Messiah in many passages, that the Jewish writers themselves could not help seeing Him, in the language of the prophet.^o We may, therefore, safely entitle it : "A Thanksgiving for the Messiah, to be used in the Church, in all Ages, in anticipation of his final Victory over all his Enemies ;" and is well selected by our compilers for Ascension-day. He is contemplated in the opening of the Psalm, as rejoicing in the victory that he hath obtained by the assistance of the Almighty Power. All his prayers are heard—He is crowned king in Zion.

The prayer for life in the 4th verse, attributed to the Redeemer, is to be regarded as his prayer, in the character of the surety of man. He had pledged himself to die for

^o "Jarchi observes, that the rabbins interpret it of the Messiah ; but, says he, it is right to explain it, moreover, of David himself, for an answer to the heretics (Christians) who err in it : and various passages in this Psalm are by the Jewish writers understood of the Messiah ; as *the King*, in ver. 1, 7, is in the *Targum* called the King Messiah ; ver. 4, is in the *Talmud* applied to him ; ver. 3, 5, are in *Zohar*, and the *Midrashes*, interpreted of him."—DR. GILL.

his people; and as to his human nature, that death must have been eternal, had not the divine pity been moved at his tears and entreaties: his body must have mingled with the dust, and his soul have abode continually, a separate spirit in the unseen world.—“But he was heard in that he feared.” And, though put to death in the flesh, he was quickened by the Spirit. “In the spirit of holiness” he was “declared at the resurrection to be the Son of God in power.” The “last Adam becomes a quickening Spirit.” “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.”^p—“In him was life, and the life was the light of man.” He could say therefore to Martha, while she mourned over the grave of Lazarus; “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”^q And, thus when he calls himself the “bread of life,” he says, “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”^r—“Because I live ye shall live also.”^s The Apostle also recognises the same glorious mystery, “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God: when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”^t

As the fountain of life, we therefore contemplate the Son of God raised from the dead and sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high. The 6th verse is evidently parallel to Psalm xv. 2: “Thou wilt make known to me the path of life—fulness of joy in thy presence—pleasures at thy right hand for ever.” All this honour and glory is represented, verse 7th, as rewarding the trust which the King Messiah placed in his God; all as the consequence of the tender love of the heavenly Father to his only begotten Son.

The remainder of the Psalm is evidently addressed to

^p John v. 26.

^q John xi. 25.

^r John vi. 57, 58.

^s John xiv. 19.

^t Colossians iii. 3, 4.

Christ himself, sitting at God's right hand, waiting till his foes be made his footstool. The end and final extirpation of these foes is, as usual, anticipated, and in a language that well agrees with the more circumstantial prophecies of the destruction of the opposers of Christ's kingdom, at the time of his second coming: "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe" "in that day."^u

One of the events of that day, as we read in the 9th verse, will be the casting of all the deceivers and corrupters of the church, and all its oppressors, "alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."^x The "sinoke" of the mystic Babylon "ariseth up for ever and ever;"^y and in the same destruction, at length, must perish the great spiritual foe, the devil or Satan; and Death and Hades will be cast in with him.

Such will be the end, and the public punishment, of all who now form their vain schemes to frustrate the grace of God, and to oppose the rising interest of Christ's kingdom. And the prayer of the redeemed of Christ must ever be agreeable with the closing verses of the Psalm before us: "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,"—"So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love HIM be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might."^z

^u 2 Thos. 1. 7, &c. ^x Rev. xix. 21. ^y Rev. xix. 3. ^z Judges, v. 31.

PSALM XXII.*

- 1 MY El, my El, why hast thou forsaken me?
So long delaying to aid in the matters of my groaning.^b
- 2 O my Elohim, I call^c in the day-time, and thou hearest not;
And in the night-season I have no rest.^d
- 3 Yet thou art enthroned in the sanctuary,
The praise of Israel.^e
- 4 In thee our fathers trusted;
They trusted, and thou didst deliver them;
- 5 They called on thee, and were delivered;
They trusted thee, and were not confounded.
- 6 Surely I am a worm, and not a man;
The reproach of man, and the contempt of the people.
- 7 All who see me mock me;^f
They pout the lip and shake the head:
- 8 "He trusted to Jehovah, that he would deliver him:
"Let him rescue him, since he delighted in him."
- 9 Surely thou art he that took me from the womb—
My dependence on the breast of my mother.

* Horsley translates the title of this Psalm, "To the Giver of Victory, concerning the Interposition of the Darkness: an Ode of David." The meaning, however, of *אֵלֵי־הַשָּׁחַר* can only be given from conjecture; and I think the probability is, that it refers to some direction concerning the music or tune. Dr. Gill notices that *אֵלֵי־יָחִיד* and *אֵלֵי־יָחִיד* are used in the *Mishnah* for a mourning woman.

^b Hare and Lowth, for *שׁוֹעֲרֵי* ישוערי would read *שׁוֹעֲרֵי* "Why art thou so far from my cry, from the words of

my roaring?" Compare *דַּבְּרֵי שִׁיר* Judges, v. 12.

^c "Keep calling."

^d Or, "am not silenced"—"no silence is to me"—"No stop is put to my cry of distress, by any relief that is vouchsafed."

^e "Tu autem in sancto habitans, laus Israel." VULGATE.—"Σὺ δὲ ἐν ἁγίῳ κατοικεῖς ὁ ἔπαινος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ." SEPTUAGINT.—"Yet thou, inhabiting holiness, art (the theme of) Israel's praise." HORSLEY.

^f "Insult me with gestures of derision.

- 10 On thee was I cast from the birth ;
From the womb of my mother thou wast my El.
- 11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near,
For there is none that helpeth.
- 12 Huge bulls have surrounded me,
Strong 'beasts' of Bashan have enclosed me.^g
- 13 They have opened wide their mouths against me ;
A lion raveneth and roareth !
- 14 Like water I was poured out,^h
All my bones are rent asunder.ⁱ

My heart is become as wax ;
It has melted in the midst of my bowels.
- 15 My strength is dried like a potsherd,
And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws,
And thou layest me in the dust of death.
- 16 For dogs have surrounded me—
The assembly of the wicked have beset me ;
- 17 They pierced through my hands and my feet ;
They laid bare all my bones ;^k

They gazed—they looked upon me ;
- 18 They parted my garments among them,
And cast lots for my vesture.
- 19 But do not thou delay, Jehovah,
O my strength, hasten to help me.

^g Or, "crowded round me." Compare כתר *keseth* "Form a ring round me." HORSLEY.

^h "I have lost all firmness." Id.

ⁱ "Are starting asunder." Id.

^k Reading כפרו and כפרו. See LXX. Vulg. and Syr. with the various readings. כפר in the Arabian lan-

guage, signifies to run through with a spear. כפר signifies to scrape, to trace out, hence to write, to delineate.

"أسفر حن" Detraxit velum de aliqua re, nudavit. They lay bare, or cause to be clearly traced through my skin, all the bones of my emaciated body.

- 20 Deliver my soul from the sword—
My deserted 'spirit'¹ from the power of the dog;
- 21 Save me from the lion's mouth,
And from the horns of the wild ox.^m
- Thou hast answered me.ⁿ
- 22 I will declare thy name to my brethren—
In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.^p
- 23 Ye that fear the Lord, praise him.
All ye seed of Jacob, give glory to him;
And fear him, all ye seed of Israel.
- 24 For he hath not despised—
Nor turned in abhorrence from the affliction of the lowly;
And he hath not hid his face from him;
But when he cried to him, he heard.
- 25 My praise shall be of thee, in the great congregation;
I will pay my vows in the presence of them that fear thee.
- 26 The lowly shall eat and be satisfied;
They that seek Jehovah will praise him:
Your soul shall live for ever.
- 27 They will reflect and turn themselves unto Jehovah,
All the extremities of the earth.
And they will worship before him,^p
All the families of the gentiles.

¹ "My desolate spirit," reduced to one, left solitary and alone. "My united one:" this seems to denote the humanity of Christ in union with the divinity:—"if the word had no relation to this mystery, I should render it 'helpless,' 'friendless.'" HORSLEY. "May it relate to anything more than יְהוָה? The human nature united with the divinity in the person of Christ?" LOWTH.

^m Unicorn or rhinoceros.

ⁿ See HORSLEY.

^p HOUBIGANT and HORSLEY.

^p SEPT. SYR. VULG. &c. Bishop

Horsley's translation of these lines is,

"All whom earth sustains eat, and bow themselves down:
Before him shall kneel all that sink into the dust.

Both my soul shall live to him,
And my seed* shall serve him:
It shall be counted to the Lord for a generation.

They shall come and declare his righteousness
Unto a people to be begotten;† for (he) hath done it."ⁿ

* "Christians are sons of God."

† "Born again of water and the spirit. Begotten by the Word."

- 28 For the kingdom is Jehovah's,
And he is the ruler among the gentiles.
- 29 They ate, and they worshipped—
All the rich 'ones' of the earth :

Before him they kneel,
All those that go down to the dust :
But their soul lived not.
- 30 A seed shall serve him ;
It shall be counted to the Lord for a generation.
- 31 They shall come, who shall declare his righteousness,⁹
To a people that shall be born, whom he hath prepared.^r

⁹ His righteousness : how God will
vindicate the rights of his Anointed
over his purchased people. Or, how

" God is just, and the justifier of him
that believeth in Jesus."
^r Or, " For he doeth it."

EXPOSITION.

"It seems the best account that can be given of this Psalm to say, that the Psalmist personates the Messiah in the garden : first oppressed with the foresight of the circumstances of his sufferings ; then comforted with the assurances of exaltation."^s The true exposition, therefore, of the prophecy will be found by comparing it with the event.

And first we are called to notice, that almost the last words of our blessed Lord, while he hung in agony and torture on the cross, were the first line of this Psalm : " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me !" giving us, as it were, a key to the meaning of the Psalm, and seeming to say, " This day, is this scripture fulfilled in your sight."

The feelings of the Redeemer's soul, at this hour of his desertion by the presence of God, no tongue of man can possibly describe. It was that particular ingredient in the bitter cup of his sufferings which was most abhorrent to his holy soul, and more than any circumstance in the torture of his animal frame proved to him " the sharpness of death."

^s Bishop Horsley.

These were "the bitter pains of eternal death." All the pangs that his people should have felt, were concentrated at that dreadful hour in their Surety's breast. And much are we bound to remember this, when we pray, "Suffer us not, in our last hour, for any pains of death to fall from thee." Doubtless, the Redeemer expected deliverance and victory in the tremendous conflict; but the delay, as it seemed to the sufferer's mind, was past endurance; so that his soul groans and roars within him in the agony of his distress.

It may be said, perhaps, that there appeared but little of the hero, in the last conflict of our Lord. But we may reply, the hero little became Him who was to be delivered up a victim to divine justice, and to suffer punishment, charged with the sins of his people. He was to "accept it as the punishment of his sins."

The death of our Lord, it will also be remarked, was very unlike the triumphant death of an ordinary saint. He did not even discover the usual fortitude, or victorious faith of the primitive martyrs; though some of these, in respect to their external sufferings, were made to drink deep of the same cup with their Master. The cause is obvious. The blessed Jesus dies not as a saint, falling asleep in the arms of his divine Keeper, having the promise, that he "shall never taste of death." But HE dies as a sinner accursed. "He tasteth death for every one" "of the many sons" he was to bring to glory: therefore, "the Captain of their salvation was made perfect through sufferings."^t The sting of death, which is now taken away in respect to his redeemed, was plunged and lost in his afflicted breast; "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."^u

The martyr in his death is supported from on high, by Him who has promised never to leave him nor forsake him: he finds that neither "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword," can "separate him from the love of Christ."—"In all these

^t See Heb. ii. 9, 10.

^u Ver. 14.

things he is more than conqueror, through Him that hath loved him."^x But it is not thus that the King of Saints meets his awful death: the wretched victim delivered for our sins feels the desertion of God: it "pleases the Lord to bruise him, to put him to grief." Hence the difference observable in the death of Jesus, and in the death of the tortured martyr.

The 2d verse naturally calls our attention back to the garden of Gethsemane, where our Lord had spent the night previous to his sufferings. That scene will illustrate how the blessed Saviour "called day and night," but could find no respite from the dreadful sufferings of his mind. We are told by the witnesses of his passion, as we had occasion to notice in a former Psalm, that "he began to be sore amazed and very heavy,"^y or, "full of anguish."^z He exclaimed himself: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death."^a And surely, a sufficient indication of the mental conflict was perceived by the sad witnesses of this scene, when they observed "his sweat" "as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

The humble sufferer, in the 3d verse, sets full before his eyes the God of Israel seated in his sanctuary; hence alone he looks for the promised help; but this help, though often sought and often obtained by ancient saints in their distress (ver. 4 and 5), is now, for a season, denied to the strong cries and entreaties of the destined victim of justice. This, the mysterious ceremonies of the sanctuary showed; for, though mercy and atonement abounded to every faithful worshipper, yet the victim of the sacrifice was never spared.

The 6th, 7th, and 8th verses clearly represent before our eyes, the cruel mockery to which our divine Master was exposed. It rarely happens but that the suffering criminal meets with pity and commiseration from the spectators of his execution and punishment. But in this the blessed Jesus was a singular exception. He met with treatment, both when he stood as a prisoner at the bar and when he was nailed to the cross, that was not fit to be

^x Rom. viii. 35, &c.

^y Mark xiv.

^z Matt. xxvi.

^a Luke xxii.

shown to a human creature! This makes him exclaim in the Psalm: "Surely I am a worm and not a man, the reproach of men and the contempt of the people."—"Then the officers took Jesus, and bound him, and led him away. And the men that held Jesus mocked him and smote him. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?"—"Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him." This he suffered from his own countrymen. "And when they had bound him they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor."

Pilate first sends him, by way of compliment it should seem, to Herod of Galilee, as being his native prince, who happened at that time to be in Jerusalem. Herod and his soldiers, we are told, "set him at nought and mocked him," and in derision of his pretension to be the king of Israel, "arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate." Nor can we wonder to find that the heathen soldiers of the governor continued the same cruel sport with one who was so marked out to contempt by his own countrymen.

"When he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to the soldiers to be crucified." This was a cruel and disgraceful part of our Master's sufferings. To be stripped naked and whipped, probably with a view, if possible, to make him confess his crimes! "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered to him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail king of the Jews: and they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head." Surely the holy soul of Jesus, foreboding this, might well exclaim, "Surely I am a worm and not a man—the reproach of men and the contempt of the people!"

"All who see me mock me to scorn; they pout the lip and shake the head, saying, He trusted in Jehovah, he will deliver him," &c. "And the people stood beholding, and

the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be the Christ, the chosen of God: and the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar:—"And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah! thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross."

The holy Sufferer hath nothing he can oppose to these insults, but an entire reliance upon the almighty Being who had formed his human nature miraculously in the womb, and from his earliest infancy, and during all the helpless years of his childhood, had made him the special object of his providential care: for the human nature of Christ was, as we have frequent intimation in Scripture, a particular object of the care of God; because the powers of darkness were sufficiently alarmed at the birth of the Son of Mary, to set on foot every scheme that infernal malice could suggest, for the destruction of the "holy child Jesus;" hence the attempt of Herod, and many more attempts, perhaps, that are not recorded: for it might seem, to the blind malice of the evil spirits, that all the hopes of human redemption depended upon the life of a frail infant, whom if they could but crush in his cradle, they should dissipate all their fears for their usurped empire.

Such I believe to be the import of the 9th and 10th verses. And now the humble Sufferer, reduced to the last extremity, as altogether helpless, casts himself upon the Protector of his infancy. Verse 11th.

The 12th and 13th verses present to our view the enemies that had surrounded our dying Lord, hoping to triumph in his last pangs. They are not, I think, to be understood of the mortal persecutors of Christ—these are described below; but of the host of the prince of darkness, who is himself pointed out, amidst beasts of inferior ferocity, by "the ravening and roaring lion."

The two next verses present us with a most afflictive view of one expiring in agonies, both of mind and body: the whole frame seems to be dissolved through fatigue and pain; the bones start asunder from the excessive torture—

the broken heart melts like wax from the internal fire that consumes him—a feverish heat dries up the moisture of his frame—parched with thirst his tongue cleaveth to his mouth. What a picture of sufferings is here!—and to think that these sufferings were endured for us, that we might die in peace, and find comfort and all-sufficient help in whatever short affliction it may please God to leave to purify us: how ought this consideration to cause us to mingle tears of joy and grief when we read or chant this Psalm, and think of our dear Redeemer expiring upon the cross!

The 16th and two following verses relate to the visible crowd that surrounded the holy Victim in the last stage of his earthly sufferings: less noble than the invisible foes that pressed upon him in their permitted hour, they are compared to dogs; yet, scarcely “behind in hate,” they help forward his sufferings. “They pierce through my hands and my feet.” We shall recollect that the circumstances of crucifixion, were to fasten the sufferer to the instrument of torture by nails driven through the palms of his hands and soles of his feet. By these means the body of the holy Victim, already exhausted by suffering, and its sides laid open by the thongs of the scourge, would naturally exhibit, in its distorted form, the sad spectacle described in this verse—the bones would be laid bare, or might all be traced through the skin.

The unconcern with which the spectators behold this object of misery, or rather, the malicious joy with which many of them see his affliction, is also noticed; and the particular circumstance that should happen to attend the division of his clothes among his executioners, is particularly pointed out. “Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout: they said, therefore, among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, *They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots.* These things, therefore, the soldiers did.”

Again, the afflicted Sufferer prays to God for help.

They that kill the body had indeed done all they could : the greatest kindness they could show, would have been to approach with the sword, and put him out of misery : but he that hath the power of death, that is, the devil, was still raging in violence, and threatening still greater evils to the expiring soul. At length his sufferings on the cross are completed—Jesus said, “It is finished : and he bowed his head, and delivered up his spirit,” having, as the last act of his trust as a dying mortal, exclaimed aloud, “Father, into thy hand I commit my spirit.” Other Psalms show us the soul of the holy Victim a prisoner in the “bands of death ;” but the Psalm before us connects his triumph with his cross, throwing a veil over the dreadful interval.

The first thought of the released Surety is, that he shall go and bear to his redeemed the happy tidings of the completion of their salvation. And the Apostle remarks on this verse, that “he is not ashamed to call them brethren.” Speaking of “the Captain of our salvation” being “made perfect through sufferings,” he observes, “For both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one : for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.*”^b

The holy soul of the Saviour again anticipates the happy consequences of its “travail.” He speaks of “the great congregation,” in the midst of whom he should offer his praises to God, and pay his vows in their presence. By this great congregation cannot, I conceive, be meant the same as the congregation of the 22d verse : that congregation was but small, “a little flock.” Nor do I know, that it can in any sense be said, that he “paid his vows” in their presence. We must follow the soul of Jesus into the unseen realms of the dead, amidst “the prisoners of hope.” And St. Peter tells us, that “being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit (or quick in spirit), he went and preached” to these spirits.”^c Here, we know, there must have been a great congregation of departed saints, who from age to

^b Hebrews, ii. 11, 12.

^c 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19.

age had been "gathered to their people:" and yet, as the Apostle says, "without us were not to be made perfect." These doubtless were prepared to hail the glad tidings of finished salvation. An indication of some wonder at that time performed among the dead seems to be given: or what can mean the account we read: "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many."^d

To this great congregation, perhaps, belonged "the innumerable company of angels," as well as "the spirits of just men made perfect."^e It is in their presence that the risen Saviour performs his vows as "the Minister of the true tabernacle," "the great High Priest of our profession." He sprinkles before the mercy-seat the blood of the atonement that he has made for his people, and offers the incense of the sacrifice which is the memorial of his perfect obedience—the vow he had undertaken and had discharged for his purchased people.

The 26th verse glances again at the poor and afflicted people he was yet to leave upon earth: "They should eat and be satisfied." In spiritual communion and in the mystic rite that showed the Lord's death until his second coming, they are to eat of their *peace-offering*, of the Paschal Lamb that was sacrificed for them. They were to eat and live for ever: "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me shall live by me."^f

There follows a remarkable prophecy of that conversion of the chief gentile nations to the faith of the crucified Malefactor, which took place in the ages immediately after the death of our Lord. This conversion of the Gentiles, as some subsequent Scriptures foretold, and as the event has shown,

^d Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.

^e Heb. xii. 22, &c.

^f John, vi. 54, &c.

was not generally sincere or truly spiritual. They worship, wonderful to be predicted!—they worship **THE CRUCIFIED**: but the world is still their supreme delight and enjoyment. They kneel before Him; but not in true spiritual adoration, or they would be delivered from “going down to the pit.” “But their soul did not live.” And “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” They had therefore only “a name to live,” when they were called Christians and were baptized. A description too well agreeing with the real state of facts in the Christian world, from the first ages of its conversion to the present time—“many shall cleave to them with flatteries.”

But, as in Israel of old there was always a remnant according to the election of grace, so a “holy seed” should always be quickened, and preserved from the gates of hell amidst these churches of carnal professors. They, and they alone, are the Lord’s real family; “the sheep that he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his precious blood.”

The manner in which this seed should be raised up for the Lord, is wonderfully represented in the last verse, when the terms are properly explained: They shall come, that is, certain persons shall come abroad preaching a Saviour’s righteousness. And in their preaching, they shall not always proclaim unheeded tidings in the ears of the dead. But “a people shall be born,” as Bishop Horsley rightly interprets, “born of water and the Spirit;” “begotten by the Word.” And on these “sons of peace,” “the peace” that his ministers bid to all, “shall rest.” They are those “whom God hath prepared.” And the issue is, in every age, and in every nation where the Gospel is preached, “as many as are ordained to eternal life, believe;”^g “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his

^g XVIIth Article.

knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many ; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong ; because he hath poured out his soul unto death : and he was numbered with the transgressors ; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.^h

^h Is. liii. 10—12.

PSALM XXIII.ⁱ

1 JEHOVAH is my shepherd, I shall not want :

2 In green pastures he will make me lie down :

3 He will lead me unto the refreshing waters,^k

He will recruit my strength ;^l

He will lead me in the right paths,

For the sake of his name.

4 Even when I go through the pass of the deadly shade^m

I will fear no harm ;

For thou art near me 'with' thy rod and thy staff—

They will console me.

5 Thou wilt prepare a table before me,ⁿ

In the face of my enemies :

Thou wilt anoint^o my head with oil :

My cup shall be full.

ⁱ The title is, "An Ode or Psalm of David."

^k "Waters of stillness," "rest," or "refreshment."

^l נפש השׁיב Lam. i. 11, plainly signifies to restore a person that is fainting for want, by a necessary supply of food.

^m "The shadow of death;" as

some suppose, a metaphorical expression for dismal horrid darkness.

ⁿ A metaphorical expression for providing sustenance. Comp. lxxviii. 19. rather entertaining a guest.

^o דשן may signify perhaps more, "Thou wilt richly anoint," like the most honored visitor.

6 Surely goodness and tender love will follow me
All the days of my life !
And my abode shall be in the house of Jehovah,
All my prolonged days.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm, taken by itself, is so easily applicable to the circumstances of every believer ; and the allusion to the shepherd and his flock, so frequently in Scripture illustrates the care of Christ over his people, we cannot be surprised that it has very generally been applied to this subject exclusively : however, from a nearer inspection of its contents, and guided by the connexion in which we find this Psalm, I have no hesitation in referring it to Christ himself, not in the character of shepherd, but of the guided, protected sheep. Its subject is the confidence of Christ in the care of his Father, not only in the days of his flesh, but especially to protect and support his departing soul, about to tread the dark valley of the shadow of death ; and may be referred accordingly to that moment when, expiring upon the cross, the Redeemer was heard to say, “ Father, into thine hands I commend my spirit.”

There was a season in his temptation, we know, when the Redeemer was exercised with the fear of death, but “ he was heard in that he feared ”—he was comforted. The Psalm before us expresses the language of his triumphant faith, gathering assurance of the future, as all his followers should, from the experience of the past. In the character of a sheep, his humble soul acknowledges the watchful care of Jehovah, his shepherd, through all the various and perplexing scenes of his eventful life. He should not want, though perhaps often exercised with the dread of it : the shepherd’s kindness would permit him to recline in green pastures, nourishing his soul with heavenly food. “ I have food to eat,” he tells his disciples, “ that ye know not of.” He doubted not in the weary path of life, when his soul would often faint within him, he should again and again be

restored, and suffered to refresh himself a little, and recruit his strength ; as the shepherd is wont to refresh his fainting flocks, as he journeys from place to place. This was especially seen when, after his temptation in the wilderness, “angels came and ministered unto him.” And again, amidst the more dreadful conflict in the garden of Gethsemane, “there was seen an angel from heaven strengthening him.”—“He leadeth me in the right paths”—all his dealings with me are just and right—I submit me to the conduct of his guiding hand.

And now, looking forward to his descent into the gloomy mansions of the dead, as a human spirit departing from its earthly tabernacle, he resigns himself into the hands of his divine Keeper, fully confident in the provision which his heavenly Guide will make for his safety. In this act of faith, the holy soul of Jesus departs from his tortured body still hanging on the cursed tree. He anticipates divine support, in defiance of all the adversaries who would doubtless pursue their imagined victim to the regions beneath ; but the work of redemption would soon be finished : he must be retained, for a little while, a prisoner among the dead ; but he anticipates nothing but blessing and prosperity as the result.

He should be received at length as a welcome, and most honoured guest by his heavenly Father : his prolonged existence, the life which he had asked and obtained would be spent in the fulness of joy at God’s right hand for ever ; and he anticipates the taking of his station in his house on high, in the character of the great High Priest over the house of God.

Such I believe to be the true import and proper application of this Psalm : but, if this scripture should have been the source from whence the Christian believer has been wont to draw comfort, and encouragement to his soul, supposing that Christ was the shepherd, and he the sheep of his hand ; let him not be alarmed lest his consolations should have been false, and the encouragement he has received unwarranted. That is very far from being the case. What belongs to Christ belongs to all his members. And all the promises, after

first lighting upon him, as the Captain of their salvation, and being received as the reward of his meritorious obedience, and the prize of his successful conflict, are scattered by his own bountiful hand as gifts that he has received for men. "Out of his fulness all we receive, and grace for grace."

These Psalms, therefore, expressive of the trust and confidence of the holy Jesus in the days of his flesh, and in the departure of his spirit into the unseen world, are not, on that account, less proper to express, and afford the model of the trust and confidence of his people in "his God and their God, in his Father and their Father." We are to follow his steps, and learn his language. We may use it with confidence and boldness, because his righteousness is ours, and the fruits of his victory are ours; and as, in some sort, each of us must be conformable to his death, so are we warranted to say, that "suffering here with Christ, we shall be glorified together." We not only have a promise of support in the valley of the shadow of death, but we have one who is gone before to prepare a way for us: one that has obtained possession of the keys of death and hades, and has assured us, that "we shall never see death." "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

PSALM XXIV.^p

1 THE earth is Jehovah's, and all that is therein^q—

The habitable land,^r and they that dwell therein:

2 For he laid its foundations above the waters,^s

And established it above the floods.^t

^p The title of this Psalm is simply, "A Psalm or Ode of David."

^q "The fulness thereof"—"its whole complement," as it were, "of creatures."

^r Properly "the habitable or tillable land," as distinguished from the sterile ocean.

^s Alluding to the formation of the

dry land, Gen. i.

^t נָהָר is usually applied to the flowing current of rivers; but in this place to the "ocean stream."—"נָהָר" says Parkhurst, "is used for the sea or great abyss." Compare Psalm xxiv. 2—Hab. iii. 8: hence the Greeks and Latins had their *Nereus*."

- 3 Who shall ascend to the hill of Jehovah,
And who shall take his station in his holy place ?
- 4 The clean of hands^a and the pure in heart :
Who hath not set his heart upon vanity,
And hath not sworn to a falsehood.
- 5 He shall receive blessing from Jehovah,
And righteousness from the Elohim ' who giveth ' him victory.^b
- 6 ' Lo ! ' a generation seeketh him—
They seek thy face, ' O Elohim of ' Jacob.^c
- 7 Lift up your heads,^d O gates !
And be lifted up, ye everlasting doors !^e
That the King of glory may come in.
- 8 Who is this King of glory ?
- Jehovah, strong and mighty ;
Jehovah, mighty in the contest.
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates !
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors !
That the King of glory may come in.
- 10 Who is this King of glory ?

Jehovah Sabaoth—he is the King of glory.

^a " Ἀθῶος χερσὶ," &c. LXX.

^x Or, "a just and equitable reward."

^y Most of the ancient versions allow us to read, "O God of Jacob."

^z The *portcullis*, the situation of which was at the *top* or *head* at the

gateway, is what I conceive to be intended by רִשְׁתֵּי. It is evidently a parallel term to פֶּתַח a door, or that which fills up the *opening* of an entrance.

^a Perhaps, "Doors of eternity."

EXPOSITION.

The ascension of our great High Priest into heavenly places, is very evidently the subject of this Psalm. It is composed in the form of a dialogue: not, as some of our expositors have conceived, between two companies of Levites, one attending the ark to Zion, and the other receiving it at its entrance: we must imagine parties of a higher nature, and a more elevated scenery, to illustrate properly the meaning of this sacred ode.^b

Certain of the heavenly hosts, "for into these things angels desire to look," seem, in the opening of the Psalm, to be contemplating the habitable globe. It is Jehovah's, with all that it contains: he formed it in the bosom of the great abyss: and, though now subjected to vanity for the sin of man, it awaits with earnest desire "the manifestation of the sons of God."

These heavenly beings have in their view, the preparations made in a better world for the reception of the just—those "heavenly things" after the patterns of which, the Jewish tabernacle was modelled, and all the holy mysteries of Zion were formed and regulated. It is asked, ver. 3, who of the sons of men shall be counted worthy to ascend that holy hill, and take his station there, as the high priest over these mysteries? and doubtless we are to extend our view to that new earth on which the mountain of the Lord's house is to be exalted.

The character of the "High Priest that became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens,"^c is then delineated in the 4th verse, and in the following the success of his mediation is predicted. He receiveth blessing and righteousness, or jus-

^b The notion of the bringing up the ark from the house of Obed Edom into the city of David, which Lowth has adopted in his *Prælectiones*, is a mere Rabbinical fancy. "The song concludes," as Horsley observes, "with a prediction of the exaltation of Messiah (for he is certainly the Jehovah of this Psalm), under the image of the entrance of Jehovah into his Temple."

^c Hebrews, vii. 26.

tification, from the God who assigneth him the palm of victory in the spiritual conflict with his foes.

The character which is given, can, indeed, apply to none of the human race, except one, who is so often designated as "the Holy One of God," "the Just One," "the Holy One of Israel." "Clean in hands and pure in heart," embraces certainly entire moral perfection—the service of the entire man, soul and body. To set the heart upon vanity, may signify the indulging of vain desires, from which I ween only one human mind was altogether free. Or, it may denote, in a sense parallel to the next line, the undertaking and pledging of a service or engagement that is never performed, but proves a delusion to those who trusted the profession or sworn promise. Such have been all the promises and oaths of man that were ever made to keep God's holy law. One only redeemed his pledge and fulfilled his oath, and had wherewith to finish what he had undertaken. It was he "who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

The 6th verse seems to represent the approach of a numerous body, who claim from the heavenly ministers admission into these glorious mansions. This numerous body, it soon appears, is none other than the attendants upon the risen Saviour, now ascending from earth to heaven. At his ascension he took possession in the sight of angels, but the full accomplishment of the prophecy is when he shall ascend with his white-robed armies from the final victory which he has won in the character of Sabaoth—great leader of the heavenly hosts. They claim admission in his name, as "the King of Glory." King, or Lord of Glory, is an undoubted title of Messiah. Yet he is positively said to be Jehovah—that Jehovah who comes from a contest below, in which his might and power had been manifested. All this well agrees with the ascension of the incarnate Son of God, when he had finished the work of man's redemption, and "having spoiled principalities and powers, now ascends on high leading his captivity captive, to take his station as priest, in the holy places made without hands, now to appear in the presence of God for us."^d

^d Hebrews, ix. 24.

It is, we remark, in the name of the King of Glory, and not in their own name, that the redeemed from among mankind demand admittance into the heavenly Zion. He, as the SURETY of his people, had been "delivered for their offences, and raised again for their justification." He has prevailed in the contest. He has silenced the accuser of the brethren; and by his proper merit claims admittance into the holiest of all for his followers. The entrance is demanded in his name. "The shout of a king is among them." "And I looked," says the beloved disciple who saw the visions of the Almighty, "and lo, a lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him an hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."^e The way is consecrated—Jesus our fore-runner is already entered—but the full consummation of these prophetic types awaits the resurrection of the just, when he who is gone to prepare a place for us, shall come again, and take us to himself. God shall come, and all his saints with him.^f

^e Revelation, xiv. 1.

^f Compare Rev. xv.

PSALM XXV.

1 8 ON thee, Jehovah, my Elohim, I fix my heart :

[On thee I wait all the day long.^g]

^g The superscription to this Psalm is merely לְדָוִד "of," or "to David," or "the Beloved." It is the first of the Psalms arranged in an alphabetical order, each couplet beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The regularity of the composition is, however, disturbed in several instances in the present state of the text; and some of the errors are so ancient that none of the versions ascend beyond them. The state of these alphabetical Psalms discovers to us very clearly what sort of corruptions have entered into the sacred text: and it appears that they are not alterations by design, but

what we may call of a mechanical nature—the errors of scribes and copyists: and what is still more worthy of notice, no adventurous critics, in ancient times, ever ventured upon alterations or conjectural emendations of the text. Where the copyists had introduced confusion by omissions or dislocations, there it remained, sacred and untouched; and the same care was taken to preserve, we may almost say, a *fac-simile* of the dilapidated text, as if the scattered ruin had been the design of the divine Architect, and not the effect of chance or carelessness.

We have a remarkable proof of this

- 2 ב On thee have I put my trust, I shall not be put to shame.
Mine enemies shall not triumph over me.
- 3 ג Aye, none who hope in thee shall be ashamed :
The vain apostates^h shall be ashamed.
- 4 ד Make thy ways known to me, O Jehovah :
Teach me thy paths.
- 5 ה Lead me in thy truth, and teach me ;
For thou art the Elohim of my salvation.
- ו [And pardon thou my iniquity, truly it is great !
For the sake of thy goodness, O Jehovah.ⁱ]
- 6 ז Remember, O Jehovah, thy compassion and thy tender love,
For they are from eternity.
- 7 ח Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgression,
According to thy tender love remember me.

in the very beginning of this poem : each couplet ought to begin with the letters of the alphabet : this is manifest from the inspection of the whole Psalm ; yet in the first couplet a line is lost ; and the next begins with א, instead of ב. In the received text thus : **אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה נַפְשִׁי אֲשָׁא : אֱלֹהֵי בְד.** Here we have evidently a dislocated text, and one word has fallen into the ב couplet, and thrown it into disorder. This, however, is easily set to rights : if we remove the stop before **בְּד** all goes on regularly ; we have, next, only to put **אֱלֹהֵי** in its usual place after **יְהוָה** and we have a regular long line, such as the structure of the poem demands ; the only deficiency discovered is the want of a short line to complete the couplet. Now, if we read the poem in the original, we find that all the lines are regular, till we come to the couplet beginning with **ד**, and there we find a supernumerary line, and a line exactly parallel in sense to the first line that wants a parallel : we have only to restore it to its place, and all is regular and in order :

**אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי נַפְשִׁי אֲשָׁא
אֵימָתְךָ קוֹרֵאתִי כָל הַיּוֹם**

In this transposition I nearly follow the arrangement of Bishop Horsley. My only objection to his method is, that it produces two equal lines ; whereas, if I mistake not, the measure is alternately long and short. His arrangement only differs in referring **אֱלֹהֵי** to the ב couplet, and reading **בְּד אֱלֹהֵי**. This dislocated text, however obvious as was the correction, has remained in the same state ever since the Septuagint version was made, for they read the text just as we find it.

^h Or, 'the reckless traitors.'

ⁱ Here, again, a long line, which should begin with the letter Vau, is lost. At the second line of the ל couplet the eye fixes upon the line wanting, and in that place it is manifestly irregular : the Vau couplet will then stand :

**וּסְלַחְתָּ לַעֲוֹנֵי כִי רַב הוּא
לִמְעַן טוֹבךָ יְהוָה**

Or, if we prefer Horsley's arrangement :

**וּסְלַחְתָּ לַעֲוֹנֵי לִמְעַן טוֹבךָ
יְהוָה כִּי רַב הוּא**

- 8 מ Good and gracious is Jehovah according to right,^k
He will teach those that err in the way ;
- 9 נ He will guide the humble in judgment,
And he will teach the humble his way.
- 10 כ All the paths of Jehovah are tenderness and truth^l
To such as observe his covenant and his testimonies.
- 11 ל For the sake of thy name, O Jehovah, redeem Israel^m—
O Elohim, from all his afflictions.
- 12 מ What man is this that feareth Jehovah ?
He will teach him in the way he shall choose.
- 13 נ His soul shall rest in bliss,ⁿ
And his seed inherit the earth.
- 14 ס The secret of Jehovah is with them that fear him,^o
And he showeth them his covenant.
- 15 ע Mine eye is continually on Jehovah ; for it is he—
He shall bring out my feet from the net.
- 16 פ Look upon me, and be gracious unto me ;
For I am desolate and afflicted.
- 17 צ Relieve the sorrows of my heart,
Deliver me from my distresses.

^k Upon the presumption of having distinguished something of the measure of this poem, that each couplet consists of a long and of a shorter line, I read על כן in this line. For this meaning of כן as a noun, see 2 Kings, xvii. 9 ; and Jer. xxiii. 10.

^l "Mercy," or "kindness and immutability, i.e. constant, never-failing kindness." HORSLEY. I think it descriptive of the Gospel of grace—of them that continued in his goodness—have not fallen from grace—Respicit Christum qui portavit et abstulit peccata mundi."

^m 'A prayer for the Jews.' We have only three words left in the text to form this ל couplet, after restoring what stands as the second to

its proper place שמך יהוה
But the reader will remark, that after the poem is finished, several superfluous words are written at the end. Of these, no account can be given, but that they were omitted by the transcriber in their proper place. Blending these together, we have the following long and short line for the Lamed stanza :

למען שמך יהוה פדה את ישראל
אלהים מכל צרותיו

ⁿ "His soul shall rest in bliss." אליו pernoctavit. The words seem to allude to the happy state of the good man's departed soul, while his posterity prosper in the present world." HORSLEY.

^o 'The Gospel dispensation.'

18 ק" [Remove now] my affliction and my travail,
And forgive all my sin.

19 ר Behold mine enemies, how many they are !
And they violently hate me.

20 ש Preserve me and deliver me—let me not be confounded,
For I have taken shelter in thee.

21 ת Let sincerity and integrity preserve me,
For I have waited on thee.^a

^p ראה is evidently a corruption here. HOUBIGANT and KENNICOTT, with HORSLEY, propose קצה "cut short." I prefer the נא קח of DIMOCK.

^a The Tau stanza may, perhaps, not be defective, as the *proportion* of the lines, as far as we can discover, is to each other in the couplet.

EXPOSITION.

The reader has been admonished that this Psalm is composed in the order of the Hebrew alphabet; and we shall afterwards find several other Psalms of the same description. No particular reason can be assigned, by us, for this artificial mode of composition. These alphabetical Psalms will be found generally to delineate the character of the Messiah, either in relation to his experience, his intercessions on behalf of his people, or his professions of loyal obedience to the holy law,^r and I think it very probable

^r How fully the learned Bishop Horsley came to approve the principle upon which this Psalm is expounded will appear from the following observations among his notes. "Upon mature consideration, however, I am persuaded that this verse (the 14th) is spoken of Messiah. I take the whole plan of the Psalm to be this :

"In the first twelve verses, the man Christ Jesus (or, in the Hutchinsonian phrase, the humanity of Christ) prays to the Trinity. In the first three, to the Word to which the humanity was united for support. In the 4th and 5th, to the Holy Spirit to instruct and guide him. In the 6th, 7th, and 8th, to God the Father to spare him. ["If it be possible, let this cup pass from me."] The imputed guilt of man, in verse 7, he speaks of as his own, because it was imputed to him. But what, it may be asked, were the trespasses and disobediences of Messiah's youth, which he requests may not be remembered? I agree with Mr. Hutchinson that the sins of נערי may be the sins *juniorum* of his younger brethren, that is, of Christians. In the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses, Messiah

that it was in allusion to these prophetic sketches of his character and proceedings, our blessed Lord says of himself, "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord that is, and which was, and which is to come—the Almighty."^s To use the expression of St. Paul, "he is the author and the finisher of our faith."

We contemplate, in the opening of this Psalm, the Mediator, who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," pleading before the throne of the Most High. I cannot see the propriety of dividing the address, with Mr. Hutchinson and Bishop Horsley, between the three Persons in the sacred Trinity, as in the note below. Nor am I altogether satisfied that the supposition of an address from the humanity of Christ to the divine Word or to the Holy Spirit, is congenial with the manifestations which are made in Scripture of the mystery of the Trinity. I believe we have no clear instance of such addresses; nor, as far as my thoughts can reach, can I conceive that the nature of the hypostatic union would admit of an address of the humanity of Christ to the divine Word, to which it was united for support.^t

celebrates the mercy of Jehovah to the faithful. In the 12th he prays for the deliverance of the true Israel from its afflicted state.

"In the 13th verse, a voice of one of the angelic choir, who has observed the extraordinary piety and devotion of the man Christ Jesus, asks with admiration, What man is this that so perfectly feareth God? And prophecies, in the last line of this and the following verse, of the bliss that awaits him; and that his seed shall inherit the earth, which will be literally fulfilled in the millenary period. In the 15th verse the same voice declares, that the true knowledge of God is with them that fear him, who are taught by divine revelation. In the 16th verse, the humanity of Christ takes up his prayer again to the divine Word, or perhaps to the Godhead generally, for support and deliverance; and this prayer is continued to the end of the Psalm."—HORSLEY on the *Psalms*, v. i. p. 209.

^s Revelation, i. 8.

^t What Bishop Horsley himself observes in his Sermon on the Incarnation, will illustrate my meaning. "Hence it appears that the intercourse which Christ, as a man, held with God, was different in kind, from that which the greatest of the prophets ever had enjoyed; and yet, how it should differ, otherwise than in degree of frequency or intimacy, it will not be very easy to explain, unless we adhere to the faith transmitted to us from the primitive ages, and believe that the Eternal Word, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, so joined to himself the holy thing which was formed in Mary's womb, that

So, in the economy of redemption, I am doubtful whether it is scriptural to introduce Christ as praying to the Holy Ghost in his distinct official capacity. Respecting the anointing of the Most Holy, and of the anointing of his people, the usual style of the sacred writers is certainly different.

It is, I think, more analogous with the truth of Scripture, to say that the divine Saviour, who was indeed "both God and man, one Christ," but who frequently veils his Godhead in his humanity, and appears as "the Son of Man," is, in the beginning of this Psalm, addressing the Deity generally, or more particularly "his God and our God, his Father and our Father." For, when we contemplate the divine Word engaged in the office of our mediation, we are always to recollect, that, "though when he was in the form of God, appeared as the divine being to the Patriarchs and prophets of old, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; yet in his incarnation he emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man:" and, although he is now exalted to his royal priesthood in the heavenly Zion, and declared to be the Son of God with power, yet still he is "in fashion as a man"—he is still, in relation to the absolute Deity, though not in relation to created beings, for to them he is as "THE SON over his own house," but in relation to THE FATHER he is still "in the form of a servant"—"the Apostle of our profession:" notwithstanding that "all power in heaven and in earth is given into his hands." It is in this character that I refer to him the language of the eleven first verses of this Psalm—standing as our Priest and Mediator in the Divine Presence.

The three first verses of the Psalm well accord with the

the two natures, from the commencement of the Virgin's conception, made one person. Between God and any living being, having a distinct personality of his own, separate from the Godhead, no other communion could obtain, than what should consist in the action of the divine Spirit upon the faculties of the separate person. This communion with God the prophets enjoyed. But Jesus, according to the primitive doctrine, was so united to the everliving Word, that the very existence of the man consisted in this union," &c. &c.

situation of our great Advocate at the right hand of God, "from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."^u Among the enemies of his kingdom, agreeably with the usual current of prophecy, the Redeemer contemplates "vain apostates," or "revolters to vanity;" that "falling away" which Paul was taught to foresee among the nations professing Christianity, and which the history of the late and of the present ages too well illustrates: these are "the Gentiles," who were to "tread under foot the holy city for forty and two months," while the faithful "witnesses of Christ" "prophesied in sackcloth," and his true followers were persecuted, and their hope in the righteousness of their Saviour gainsayed and contradicted. It is this part of the conflict that the prayer of the Mediator particularly embraces: and to those who wait on God, "holding the mystery of the faith in a good conscience," whatever may be the treatment which their persons or their doctrines meet with from apostate Christians, may be applied the prediction of Isaiah respecting the Jewish remnant:^x "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

The 4th and 5th verses may surprise us in this connexion, being a prayer for instruction and guidance in the truth. To the Redeemer, in his divine capacity, this cannot apply; for he knoweth all things; but, in the character of the Prophet and Teacher of his people, the Mediator is said to know only what is revealed to him for the purpose of instructing his church. It is in this view, in relation to the day of his second coming, which is the great event for which his people are looking, our Lord said to his disciples, "But of that day and of that hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels that are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." And so again, when this secret is in some measure to be revealed to the church, the title of the prophecy runs: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which *God gave unto him* to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."^y

^u Hebrews, x. 13.^x Chap. lxi. ver 5.^y Rev. i. 1.

And when St. John is distressed in his vision, that none is found worthy to open the book and to loose the seals of the prophetic roll, he is comforted by the assurance that "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."² The prayer of our Advocate prevailed to procure for us "the sure word of prophecy;" this is to serve us for the present, "as a lamp shining in a dark place:" and the prayer of our victorious Champion will at length prevail, for the unfolding of every mystery—then "the day-star is to arise," and "we are to know as we are known."

Another great branch of our Lord's mediation is the pardon of the sins of his people, of his younger brethren upon earth, and especially, perhaps, of those of them who are young in years, or but little children in the adopted family of the Heavenly Father,³ and in whom human nature is strongest. "In many things," we are taught to say, "we offend all:" and, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:" but, "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins." For, though, in one great point of view, as it relates to the covenant of works and to the everlasting state, the people of God were all justified when the Redeemer was raised from the dead, and he "by one offering had for ever perfected them that are sanctified;" yet, in the view of a chastening God, in regard of the discipline that trains the heirs of glory, there is still an account taken of sins—and that account much affects the prosperity of souls and the general felicity of the church.

It is in regard of these offences that a continual application of the atonement is required from the hand of our High Priest, who bears our iniquities—"the iniquities of our holy things." And this is one respect in which our salvation is connected with the life of the risen Saviour; "much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him;"—"for if, when we

² Chap v. ver. 5.

³ Comp. 1 John ii. 12.

were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."^b

These reflections will enable us to form a right conception of our risen Saviour's prayer in the latter part of the 5th, and in the 6th and 7th verses.

In the 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th verses the Mediator declares his Father's name unto his brethren: and, as the priest, when he had offered incense in the Jewish tabernacle, came out to bless the people, so our great High Priest pronounces his benedictory prayer over his waiting people. The messenger of the covenant declares that our reconciled God "is good and gracious according to right," having accepted the atonement from the Surety's hands. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

A promise of divine instruction follows to the meek or humble, those who are sensible of their spiritual poverty: they shall know the truth, and be kept in the right way: whatever deceivers may arise, it is not possible that they should deceive the very elect. When "all the world wonders after" the authors of their delusions, there is an exception of those that are "written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world."

While believers observe the covenant of their God, they find nothing but tender love, love unchangeable, fixed and established for ever. The covenant institution here mentioned is, beyond all doubt, that covenant, of which Christ is the Victim offered for its confirmation; of which Christ is the Surety, the Mediator, and the Pledge. "There is, therefore, now, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, for he is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe."

The benediction of our High Priest is, that, for his name sake, God would deliver his Israel from all his affliction; and his church will never cease to receive the benefit of this blessing, till sin and sorrow have no place. "Many

^b Romans v. 10.

are the troubles of the righteous, but out of them all the Lord delivereth them." We know besides, that the resurrection of the natural Israel will be "life from the dead."

The three following verses, the 12th, 13th, and 14th, I think, with Horsley, are to be considered as the language of some angelic being contemplating the scene of our great High Priest's officiating in the heavenly tabernacle, and taught to anticipate the happy results. He admires the faithful servant of Jehovah: his prayers for instructions he anticipates shall be answered. His soul resteth in bliss, and with him, the souls of his redeemed. At length, when the time of his kingdom comes, his spiritual seed shall possess the earth; and, as future prophecies disclose, shall reign there with Christ for a thousand years, aye, for ever and ever. In the mean time, while they are going through their earthly pilgrimage, they are the subject of the secret illumination of the Spirit of God. Their Mediator has prayed for them; and God has sent them "another Comforter" "to guide them into all truth," and to cause them "to know the things which are freely given them of God;" even all the irreversible grants of the everlasting covenant—"bearing witness to their spirits that they are the children of God:" but "the world knoweth them not;" it is as yet as a secret whispered in their ears by an unseen guide: these "joys a stranger intermeddleth not with."

From the 15th to the end of the Psalm, the Mediator is again heard to resume his intercessions; and we remark, he still appears "to be afflicted in all the affliction" of his people: he considers all the stratagems and the violence of the enemies of his church as aimed against his own person—"He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye"—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He calls the sins of his people his own sins, and asks forgiveness as for himself. Nor does our spotless and holy Priest cease to supplicate—waiting upon God, till all his purchased people are saved from sin and made perfect in holiness. Thus is he both "the ALPHA and the OMEGA, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, the author and the finisher of our faith."

PSALM XXVI.^c

- 1 PASS sentence on me, O Jehovah, for I have walked in my
perfection :
And I have trusted in Jehovah^d—I shall not be shaken.
- 2 Examine me, O Jehovah, and try me,
Prove my reins and my heart.
- 3 For thy tender love is before mine eyes,
And I walk in thy truth.
- 4 I have not sat with vain men ;^e
Neither have I gone with the dissemblers.
- 5 I have hated the assembly of the rebellious ;
And with the rebellious let me not abide.
- 6 Let me wash my hands in innocency,
And let me be about thine altar, O Jehovah,
- 7 To cause the sound of thy praise to be heard—
To recite all thy wondrous works.
- 8 Jehovah, I have loved the habitation of thy house,
And the resting-place of thy glory.
- 9 Gather not my soul with sinners,
Nor my life with men of blood ;
- 10 ‘ With those,’ in whose hand was an evil design—
And their right hand was filled with bribery.
- 11 As for me, I will walk in my perfection ;
Deliver me and be gracious unto me ;

^c “Of” or “for David,” or “the Beloved,” is the superscription of this Psalm also.

^d “And on Jehovah trusting.” LXX. and Vulg.

^e Horsley renders, “I never associate with the wretched sons* of vanity—I go not in with those that seek concealment†.”

* Literally, “mortals” (or persons associated together. See Sim. Heb. Lex).
† That is, “those who hide themselves,” who shun the light, and seek privacy, to practise the abominable rites of sorcery and magic. “I go not in, that is, I never enter their secret haunts.”

12 Stablish my foot in an even place :

In the congregations I will bless Jehovah.

EXPOSITION.

A Psalm that commences with a demand for justice at the tribunal of the Almighty, must necessarily belong to our righteous Advocate. Who else could ask for and challenge the examination of his secret thoughts and desires, and say to the heart-searching God, "I have walked in thy truth"—"I have walked in my perfection?" With this clue to the person whose righteousness is pleaded, the nature of the petition seems to fix our attention on that period of our Redeemer's conflict, when his holy soul has in contemplation, its departure into the unseen world. Not for himself, be it remembered, does he pray; but for them whose persons he represents, and for whom he treads the valley of the shadow of death, for whom he goes to prepare a place.

The drift of the prayer is, I have hated the practices and schemes of rebellious man, I have abhorred all society with those who have cast off the fear of God. May my righteous Judge separate me in my death from these! He then contemplates in his prayer his assumption of his priestly office: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth."^f

Let me wash my hands in innocency, referring to the various baptisms in the Jewish ceremonial, which were intended to typify the consecration of our great High Priest: and let me take my station around thine altar, that is, to officiate there as the minister of the true tabernacle, to offer continually before God the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. This employment the devoted servant of the Father claims as his delightful task.

His prayer is repeated: "Gather not my soul with sinners, &c." And he could urge a plea that never could meet with a refusal on the part of that God who loveth righteousness: "I have finished the work that thou gavest

^f John xvii. 19.

me to do:" I ask to enter into that rest, promised to the obedient; and, after all my toils and labours, to enter upon the blessed employ of the eternal sabbath, amidst the congregations above. The request of our Advocate was heard, and at his departure he assures his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that, where I am, there ye may be also."^g

At the door of the tabernacle, into which our risen Saviour is entered, the Christian congregation is, in a certain sense, always to be supposed as worshipping. "But ye are come unto the Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel."^h

^g John, xiv. 2, &c.

^h Hebrews, xii. 22, &c.

PSALM XXVII.ⁱ

1 JEHOVAH is my light and my help;

Whom should I fear?

Jehovah is the strength of my life;

Of whom should I be afraid?

2 When the wicked approached against me,

To devour my flesh;

They, mine enemies and foes,

They stumbled and fell.

ⁱ This Psalm is also entitled, "Of," or "for David," or "the Beloved." The first six verses of this Psalm should, I think, be kept distinct from

the remainder. Horsley united them to the last; but I should prefer the proposal of Kennicott, to consider them as composing a Psalm by themselves.

- 3 Though a host should encamp against me,
 My heart shall not fear;
 Though war should rise against me,
 In this will I trust.
- 4 One thing I requested from Jehovah;
 This will I seek:
 That I may dwell in the house of Jehovah
 All the days of my life:
 To behold the beauty of Jehovah—
 To contemplate his mansion.*
- 5 Truly he will hide me in his pavilion
 In the day of adversity:
 He will conceal me in the secret place of his tent—
 He will set me upon a rock:
- 6 And now he will lift up my head
 Above my enemies around me;
 And I will sacrifice at his tabernacle sacrifices of triumph;
 I will sing and celebrate Jehovah.
- 7 Jehovah, hear my voice 'when' I cry—
 Be gracious to me, and answer me.
- 8 My heart, to thee he hath spoken, "Seek ye my face,"¹
 Even the face of Jehovah."
- 9 I will seek: hide not thy face from me,
 Turn not away thy servant in displeasure.
 Thou hast been my preserver—do not abandon me—
 Do not forsake me, O my Elohim.
- 10 Let my helper, when my father and my mother have forsaken
 me,
 Even Jehovah, take me up.
- 11 Instruct me, Jehovah, concerning thy way, and lead me
 In the path that is right.

* Perhaps better: That I may set
 my eyes ["have in sight." HORSLEY.]
 on the beauty of Jehovah, and be
 fixed in gaze on his dwelling.

¹ "To thee, my heart, he hath
 said, 'Seek ye my face.'" ARCH-
 BISHOP SECKER. Compare Psalm ii.
 "Inquire of me."

- 12 Because of my adversaries, deliver me not up
 To the will of mine enemy :
 For false witnesses have risen against me,
 And he breatheth violence.
- 13 Surely I have trusted to see the goodness of Jehovah
 In the land of the living.^m
- 14 Expect Jehovah—hold fast—let thine heart be strong,
 And expect Jehovah.ⁿ

^m לִרְיָא which creates great difficulty in this line, is omitted by the ancient versions and some MSS.

ⁿ "These seem to be the words of an oracular voice." HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

These are still the pious breathings of the Redeemer's soul. He declares his trust in God, and in holy boldness defies the adversary in the conflict he foresees, when he shall enter the lists with the powers of darkness in the cause of his people. Such we may briefly state to be the subject of the four first verses of this Psalm.

In the 5th verse we have notice of one particular request which was nearest the heart of the divine Jesus. It was, that he might be, where he could always keep in sight the resting-place of the divine Majesty whom he sought to propitiate.

Was it then ever a fear in the mind of the holy Sufferer, that in the death he was to endure for his redeemed people, he should be separated from the divine Presence, and shut out from the mansions of light, and be confined, as was the sentence passed upon those whose surety he was, in the abode of the dead? I would not take upon me positively to answer this question: but I think we have some intimation of this kind. And certainly there was a something in death, which the devoted Victim particularly dreaded, and which, in the days of his flesh, was the object of his strong cries and entreaties; and in respect of which particular request, "he was heard," though in respect of the appointed sentence in general, he could find no remission of its pains and penalties.

We are to recollect too, that in the situation in which the departed spirit of Jesus entered the abode of the dead, namely, as the surety and representative of certain persons; *his* release must be *their* release from death and from hades. And it is in this view, doubtless, that the rising of Christ from the dead is spoken of in Scripture, as a particular grace and kindness vouchsafed by the Almighty Father, to Him whom he had before "been pleased to put to grief." The good pleasure of the Father to afflict him, and the favour shown in releasing him, alike suppose him to be the Surety of his people. He was put to death for their sins, and raised for their justification.

In the 7th verse, our Advocate proceeds with his intercessions, particularly with respect to his church militant still on earth; for the great High Priest bears also upon his shoulders and upon his breast the names of "the remnant of the woman's seed" against whom the adversary still "goes forth to make war," after that HE is caught up to the throne of God.

Our Lord applies to himself the general precept, "Seek ye my face;" or rather the language of a former oracle in the second Psalm, "inquire of me:" it particularly concerns him; and he prepares to discharge for his people, the office of their Mediator and Advocate. Assuming the character of his afflicted people, he prays to his heavenly Father, and earnestly requests that he may not be denied by that Helper, whose love to his reconciled children exceeds a father's or a mother's care.^o The Redeemer counts himself as one of his people: his style is, "Behold, I and the children which God has given me."

In the 11th verse we meet again with a particular prayer for instruction. I cannot but think, that this request has reference to that dispensation of Providence which relates to the coming of Christ, and the establishment of his glorious kingdom upon earth. As we have noticed before, for some mysterious cause, "the Father hath put the times and seasons in his own power," and "the Son himself

^o *Father* and *Mother* may perhaps be symbolical of the help afforded by princes and governments to the church of Christ.

knoweth not the day nor the hour." That is, as I have before observed, knoweth it not as the prophet of his church; hath it not in his instruction which he delivers to his church. His prayers, however, have prevailed in part, as the book of Revelation testifies, and will prevail still more and more, as that blessed book and other prophecies become better understood. The request of his lips is not denied him: He is raised again from the dead, and admitted as the priest into the heavenly tabernacle, where he longs to be. "The God of peace hath brought again from the dead" Him, who is "the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant;" and this, doubtless, was the joy set before him, for the sake of which, he is represented as "enduring the cross, *overlooking* the shame;" and, adds the Apostle, "is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." This happened at that very crisis of the tremendous conflict, when his adversaries had calculated upon his entire destruction. Then was the child of the mystic Eve, "whom the dragon was prepared to devour, caught up to God and to his throne."^p And with him "our life is hid" "with Christ in God;" and "when Christ who is our life shall appear," when he shall come forth from the tabernacle, "then shall we appear with him in glory."

And not only so; but when we depart from these earthly houses, we shall go to him, while he yet delayeth his coming: where we shall behold the beauty of Jehovah and contemplate his holy mansion. For thus did our dying Saviour pray: "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me;" may behold it in the place of departed spirits, ere yet the time be come when they are to be revealed in it: and so no longer walk by faith but by sight; not by faith as during their pilgrimage on earth, but in full view of the heavenly glory.

The two following verses, the 12th and 13th, seem to glance at the low state of true religion, and the very afflictive situation of the church, in the latter days; when, what with

^p Revelation, xii. 5.

falsehood and what with violence, in the last effort perhaps of the old serpent in his persecution of the mystic woman, the cause of Christianity will be threatened with destruction. It would seem as though the Advocate were unsuccessful, and men will begin to say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" "I have trusted," says the earnest and zealous Pleader, "to see the goodness of Jehovah in the land of the living;" that is, of living men, on this earth, as distinguished from the abodes of the departed; "when God's kingdom shall come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven." He is answered in the last verse, and encouraged to persist in his supplications, and to expect their fulfilment, though it should seem to be a little delayed. And we may apply to our Redeemer here, his own words of himself, when he wept and groaned at the tomb of Lazarus: "Father, I thank thee, that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."⁹

⁹ John, xi. 41, &c.

PSALM XXVIII.

1 I WILL cry unto thee, Jehovah,
My rock,⁶ be not thou silent to me,⁴

Lest, if thou answer me not,⁵
I become like them that go down to the pit.

2 Hear the voice of my supplication when I call upon thee,
When I lift up my hands towards thy holy oracle.⁸

¹ "A Psalm of," or "for David," or "the Beloved."

² Instead of "my rock," we should perhaps render "my Maker," or "Framer."

³ "Cum Ψ pers. *Conticescendo se subdurit.*" SIM. LEX.—"Averse to

hear me." HORSLEY.

⁴ "Propr. $\phi\mu\mu\omicron\nu\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$," SIM. LEX.—"Averse to answer." HORSLEY.

⁵ דְּבִיר the place in the holy of holies, whence the divine responses were given.

- 3 ^y Draw me not out with the rebellious,
And with the workers of vanity.
Those who say, "Peace," to their neighbours,
While evil is in their hearts :
- 4 Give them according to their works,
And according to the evil of their deeds :
Give them according to the action of their hands—
Render to them their deserving.
- 5 ^z "Because they regard not the works of Jehovah,
Nor the operation of his hands,
He will destroy them, and not build them."^a
- 6 Blessed be Jehovah,
For he hath heard the voice of my supplication.
- 7 Jehovah is my strength and my shield—
My heart hath trusted in him, and I am helped ;
Therefore my heart rejoiceth,
And I praise him in my song.
- 8 Jehovah is the strength of his people and 'their' refuge :^b
The victories of his Anointed 'are from' him.^c
- 9 Help thy people, and bless thine heritage ;
Govern them, and lift them up for ever.

^y "Draw me not out with." An allusion, I conceive, to a shepherd selecting out a certain portion of his flock. "Reckon me not among."—PAOR. LEE.

^z These three lines, I think, are the answer of the oracular voice.

^a "Pull them down and not build them."

^b The versions and eight MSS. read לעצמו

^c Literally, "and he is the victories of his Anointed." Bishop Horley renders these two lines : "Jehovah is the strength of his people—and the strengthener of the salvations of his Anointed one, is He."

EXPOSITION.

These are still the supplications of our great High Priest, who "is not entered," as the Apostle hath taught

us, "into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."^d It is, as usual, on behalf of his mystical body, that he offers his petitions, especially for that part of it which is still left in the midst of a persecuting and seducing world. On their behalf the minister of the true tabernacle spreads his hands to the place of the holy oracle. If you respect the outward state of the church, it might seem at times as if God heard not the prayer of her great Advocate, and the situation of the members of Christ is hardly distinguishable from the wicked world at large. This, with respect to the church as a body, would particularly be the case, in that period of the prevalence of Antichrist, which would intervene between our Redeemer's assumption of his priestly office in the heavenly Zion, and the season of his coming in his kingdom. This great apostacy we find accordingly is constantly in the view of the Spirit of prophecy when he foretells what shall come to pass in the latter days.

These apostate professors and corrupters of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, are the subjects of the 4th and 5th verses. They are distinguished as "workers of vanity," that is, "the inventors and framers of a false and idolatrous worship;" they are further distinguished as using the language of the gospel of peace, but with evil and hypocritical design. With these rebels, who are contentious and obey not the truth, the Advocate prays not to be drawn out: that is, he renounces them in the character of the REDEEMER OF MEN. Let not these be my selected portion—I own them not as the sheep for whom I shed my blood. Let them have no share in that atonement they profess to believe—let them be left to the righteous judgment of God—let them die in their sins, uninterested in the redemption of thy sanctified ones, and reap the just recompense of their evil deeds.

These persons may claim kindred with the great Head of the church, and may have held an eminent station in it. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out

^d Hebrews ix. 24.

devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.”^e

Their fate and the entire destruction of the deceivers of the church and of the world is next, in the 5th verse, foretold by the sacred oracle.

On this the great Advocate resumes his address in the language of thanksgiving and praise, in the midst of the congregation that are assembled with him on Mount Zion. In the two last verses the heavenly choir seem to unite in the song “to God and to the Lamb.” They celebrate their great Leader in the glorious victories, which God hath wrought by him. They sing “Hosannah to the Son of David;” and anticipate the happy event of his reign upon the earth, and the everlasting exaltation of his people. And this must continue to be the prayer of the whole family in heaven and in earth, till “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ; and he shall take to himself his great power, and shall reign.”^f

^e Matt. vii. 22, 23.

^f Rev. xi. 15, &c.

PSALM XXIX.^g

- 1 ASCRIBE unto Jehovah, O ye mighty,^h
Ascribe unto Jehovah glory and power :ⁱ
- 2 Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory of his name ;
Worship Jehovah with holy reverence.^k
- 3 The voice of Jehovah on the waters !
The Glorious El thundereth !
- 4 The voice of Jehovah in all its force,
The voice of Jehovah in all its majesty !

^g “A Psalm of,” or “for David,”
or “the Beloved.”

ⁱ “Victorious power.”

^h “Sons of the mighty.” Bishop
Horsley has “O ye sons of idolatry.”

^k So STREET. “In the pomp of
holiness.” HORSLEY. Or, “In the glo-
rious places of the sanctuary.”

- 5 The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars,
Jehovah breaketh the cedars of Lebanon!
- 6 He maketh Lebanon to skip like a calf,
And Sirion like a young buffalo!
- 7 The voice of Jehovah striketh flames of fire,¹
8 The voice of Jehovah shaketh the wilderness:
Jehovah shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh!
- 9 Jehovah maketh the oaks to tremble,^m
And strippeth 'bare' the forests:
And from his templeⁿ his voice proclaimeth^o his glory.
- 10 Jehovah sitteth above the deluge,
Jehovah sitteth as king for ever:
- 11 Jehovah giveth strength^p to his people,
Jehovah giveth his people the blessing of peace.

¹ This is probably the meaning of חִצֵּב *to hew, or chip off*. Compare

חִצֵּב חִצֵּב "Striketh out the forked flames of fire." HORSLEY.

^m So LOWTH and SECKER.—"Maketh havoe of the oaks." HORSLEY.

ⁿ "The heavens above the clouds and storms, where he resideth in pure majesty, and reigneth as king for ever." GEDDES.

^o אָמַר "*dicendum est, dicere convenit*." SIM. LEX. But I have no doubt that the reading proposed by Bishop Hare and others, is the true one: he reads קָלָה instead of כָּלָה which, certainly, is hardly susceptible of any sense in this place. With many MSS. and all the versions he also reads כְּבוֹדָה The line will then stand:

וּבְהִיכָלֵךְ קָלָה אָמַר כְּבוֹדָה

^p "Victorious power."

EXPOSITION.

I gladly adopt the observations of Bishop Horsley on this Psalm. "This XXIXth Psalm," says he, "taken literally, seems to describe the effect of a great storm, from which, however, the people of Israel were providentially protected. But I have no doubt, that the storm is mystical, describing the violent conflict between the Gospel and its opponents in the latter ages. This is evident, I think, from verse the first, and from the end of the Psalm; from the 1st verse, in which the sons of the mighty, the great potentates of the earth, are called upon to submit to Jehovah, and to worship him; and from the conclusion of the Psalm,

which describes the final submission of the whole world, God's control and direction of the whole tumult, his final victory, and his promise that he will give his people, that is, the spiritual Israel, the blessings of peace."

The description, if we attend to its particular circumstances, is that of a great storm of thunder accompanied with torrents and floods of water. The storm is felt through all the land of Canaan. In the north, where it seems to enter on the Holy Land, the lofty mountains of Lebanon and Hermon feel its influence: the cedars are shivered to pieces, and an earthquake shakes these hills from their very foundations. Even to the wilderness of Kadesh on the opposite border in the south, the storm penetrates, and the extent of its ravages as it moves along, is marked on the one hand by the trembling oaks, and on the other hand by the stripped forests. In the topography of the Holy Land I conceive, that by oaks, is distinguished the district of Bashan, that is, the eastern border; and that some districts in the lower country to the west, were known by the term forests. The forests are distinguished from the hill country of Judea, 2 Chron. xxvii. 4. And we read of "the forest of his Carmel," 2 Kings, xix. 23, and Isaiah, xxxvii. 24. So that the whole country is portrayed before us: and we may say of this avenging scourge, whatever it may forebode, as the prophet says of the king of Assyria, whose desolating armies he also compares to an overflowing river, passing through the land of Judah: "the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Emmanuel!"^a And I suspect that in this instance, as in others where the destruction occasioned by Israel's enemies for the time being, is foretold, whether the Assyrian or the Babylonian, the spirit of prophecy intermingles allusions that render them types of a greater enemy which in the latter days is to stand up against the King of kings, and be broken before him, in this very country of Canaan.

"Evil from the north, and great destruction," we may call a general burden of the Jewish prophets; and often has

^a Isaiah viii. 8.

the Assyrian, the Babylonian, and the Roman trod in the track of this mystical storm : but still, all is not fulfilled.

Joel speaks of his northern army of symbolical locusts, as removed into this very wilderness of Kadesh, where the storm at last is sent to waste its fury.^r And this is to be at a time, when Israel is “no more to be a reproach among the heathen.”^s It appears also from Daniel, that the great Antichristian power in the final conflict of the nations, pursues this same track. “He shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown : but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.” That is, he shall pursue the line of the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, not spreading farther eastward than Jordan and the Dead Sea, until he reach the land of Egypt. For “the land of Egypt shall not escape.”^t

In the midst of the track of this mystic storm and inundation, as pointed out in the Psalm before us, lieth the fatal Armageddon ; the spot where “the kings of the earth and of the whole world” are gathered “to the battle of that great day of Almighty God.” Here the brunt of that storm is poured forth, “that maketh the oaks to tremble, and layeth bare the forests, and that maketh Lebanon and Sirion to skip like the frisking calves ;” for, in a general view of the Holy Land, the plain of Armageddon, or of Esdraclon, may be said to lie in the centre of these objects, Lebanon and Hermon, the oaken shades of Bashan and the forests towards Carmel, or in the land of Ephraim and Benjamin : for several districts bear the appellation of the forests.

What is meant by the expression in the latter part of the 9th verse, is, I think, at length discovered by the view of the passage in the Revelation which we are now comparing. “And he gathered them together into a place called, in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air : and there came a GREAT VOICE out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and light-

^r Chap. ii. 20.

^s Chap. ii. 19.

^t Daniel xi. 40, &c.

nings: and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great."^u I have only to remark further, after some able expositors of prophecy, that the extent of country assigned for the treading of the wine-press of the wrath of Almighty God, namely, "the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs," agrees with the length of the land of Canaan: in the language of this Psalm, from the mountains of Lebanon to the wilderness of Kadesh. The Psalm thus explained, we see the true application of the last two verses. It is Jehovah that directeth this storm, he hath the pre-eminence; and in the sequel his throne is established for ever upon earth, and his people enjoy the long-promised kingdom of their Messiah: the "meek inherit the earth."

^u Rev. xvi. 16, &c.

PSALM XXX.*

- 1 I WILL extol thee, Jehovah, for thou hast drawn me up,⁷
And hast not suffered my foes to rejoice over me.
- 2 Jehovah, my Elohim, I cried unto thee,
And thou hast restored me, O Jehovah;^z
- 3 Thou hast brought up my soul from the abode of the dead,
And hast quickened me from among them that go down to the pit.

* The title affixed to this Psalm is, "A Song at the Dedication of the House of David;" which title, when compared with the subject of the Psalm, is a very satisfactory proof how little authority is to be attributed to these titles of the Jewish editors.

^y דליתני signifies, literally,

"Thou hast drawn me up," as water or a bucket of water from a well. Compare the Syriac and Arabic cognates, and see SIMON.

^z רפא proprie *sarsit resarsit*. Metaphorice *reparavit, restauravit*. Compare 1 Kings, xviii. 30; Psalm lx. 4.

4 Sing to Jehovah, ye his beloved,
And celebrate the memorial of his holiness.^a

5 Though 'there be' a moment in his anger,
'There is' life in his favour.

Weeping cometh at evening to abide :
But in the morning 'there is' a shout of joy :

6 Therefore have I said : "In my peace
I shall never be moved."^b

7 O Jehovah, in thy favour hast thou established it,
As the strong mountains."

Thou didst hide thy face :
I was sore afraid.

8 Unto thee I called, O Jehovah,
And unto my Lord I made my supplication :

9 "What profit is there in my blood,
In my going down to the pit ?

Shall dust celebrate thee ?
Shall it declare thy truth ?

10 Hear, O Jehovah, and be gracious unto me :
Jehovah, be thou my help."

11 Thou hast converted my mourning into rejoicing ;
Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.

12 Therefore my soul shall laud thee, and not be silent :
Jehovah, my Elohim, I will celebrate thee for ever.

^a Or, "his holy name." MUDGE.
Exod. iii. 15.

^b "'And I said, In my prosperity I shall never be moved;' that is, 'when once the season of my bliss is come, I shall enjoy it for ever without interruption.' This seems, indeed, the

rendering most consistent with the order of the Hebrew words."—"The Chaldee paraphrase seems to take the verse in the sense proposed : 'And I said, When I am seated in security I shall never be moved to all eternity.'" HORSELEY.

EXPOSITION.

Theodoret interpreted this Psalm of the restoration of the human nature by Christ, through his resurrection from the dead. This doubtless is the happy consequence ; but we are to apply it, in the first instance, to the person of the holy Jesus himself, as Mr. Hutchinson has done, and Augustine before him ; to which application and interpretation of the Psalm, Bishop Horsley upon the whole inclines.

We may call the Psalm, therefore, a thanksgiving for the resurrection of Christ. In this view the three first verses will need no explanation ; and “ if we are risen with Christ,” we shall feel an interest in the song, that cannot be communicated or explained to a stranger. We shall then unite heartily in the Psalm, and celebrate the memorial of “ Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.”

There had been a most severe conflict, though but of short duration. This, our recollection of the cross and passion of our gracious Master will sufficiently explain. There had been a season when the blessed Jesus was compelled to endure a sense of the wrath of Almighty God, in his character as the Surety of man : but it was but for a moment, compared with the duration of the favour that he was to experience in the same capacity—even life for evermore. The night of his sufferings was to be exchanged for the joys of an everlasting day. And he has appointed it to be told to his followers, who in any measure drink of the cup that he drank of, and are baptized with the baptism with which he was baptized, that their “ light affliction,” and theirs is light, because his was heavy, and because he received the stroke of the avenging Judge, and left for them only the chastening of the loving Father—that their “ light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

The 6th verse is clearly applicable to the joy that was set before the divine Saviour, for which he endured the cross.

But, as these Psalms which treat of the Saviour’s passion

generally record, there was a season (7th and 8th verses) when his "soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death"—"when he was heavy and sore amazed" at the dread of what he should endure in death—when he prayed in such an agony, that "his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood dropping upon the ground."

The 9th and 10th verses are but a paraphrase of our Lord's prayer in the garden, in that night when sorrow came, indeed, to lodge in his breast. "O my Father! if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." And here we discover, again, that there was something that the soul of the blessed Jesus feared, and "was heard in that he feared;" and that this related to his abode in the departed state, whither death must convey his separated spirit.

The Psalm, as usual, ends in a thanksgiving for the deliverance vouchsafed to the Redeemer's prayers; and he proposes to lead the praises of his redeemed in the courts above. Praise is the peculiar worship of paradise; and the risen Saviour is the great High Priest that presides in that worship, a worship which we, through his mediation, may anticipate in his courts below.

PSALM XXXI.^c

1 IN thee, O Jehovah, have I taken shelter,
Let me not be confounded for ever.

2 In thy righteousness deliver me :
Incline thine ear to me—hasten.

Deliver me, be to me a strong rock,
A place of defence to save me :

3 For thou art my rock and my fortress,
Therefore, for the sake of thy name, lead me and guide me.

^c Title in the Hebrew למנצח מזמיר לדוד

- 4 Bring me out of the net they have hidden for me,
For thou, Jehovah, art my strength.
- 5 Into thy hands I will commit my spirit ;
^d Deliver me, Jehovah, El of truth.
- 6 'Thou hatest them that regard lying vanities ;
As for me, I have placed my trust in Jehovah.
- 7 I will rejoice and exult in thy tender love,
'When thou shalt have regarded my affliction,
Shalt have excepted my soul in adversity ;
- 8 When thou shalt no 'longer' give me up bound, into the hand
of the enemy,
When thou shalt set my feet in an open place ;
- 9 When Jehovah shall pity me because of my distress.
- Mine eye was consumed with grief,
My breath and my bowels ;
- 10 For my life hath been spent in sorrow,
And my years in sighing :
My strength was wasted with sufferings,^e
And my bones were consumed.
- 11 I have been the reproach of all mine adversaries,
A grievance^h and abhorrence to my neighbours :
When mine acquaintance saw me without,
They fled from me.
- 12 I was given up as one that is dead and forgotten ;
I was as a vessel that is destroyed :
- 13 Surely I heard the muttering of many ;
Fear was on every side,

^d " 'Thou hast,' i. e. 'thou most surely wilt;' the thing is certain as if it were done." HORSLEY.

^e Vulg. Syr. and LXX. See also Horsley's note.

^f "Kennicott says אשר is used here for *quando*. I think it is used in the sense of *that, because, or inasmuch*

as; but, that the preterperfects, subjoined to the futures, have the force of the subjunctive future of the Latin language." HORSLEY.

^g Suffering for sin—punishment. Compare 2 Sam. xv. 12.

^h See Simon in אֲרֵר

While they were taking counsel together against me,
Were devising to take away my life.

- 14 But I, I have trusted in thee, O Jehovah,
I have said, Thou art my Elohim :
15 My times are in thy hand—vouchsafe me a shelter
From the hand of mine enemies and persecutors.
16 Cast the light of thy countenance upon thy servant,
Help me in thy tender love.
17 O Jehovah, let me not be confounded,
For I have called upon thee.

THE WICKED SHALL BE CONFOUNDED¹, THEY SHALL GO
DOWN TO THE ABODE OF THE DEAD ;

- 18 THE LIPS OF FALSEHOOD SHALL BE SILENCED,
WHICH HAVE SPOKEN DISDAINFULLY AGAINST THE RIGH-
TEOUS ' ONE,'
IN PRIDE AND CONTEMPT.

- 19 How great is thy goodness, O Jehovah,
Which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee,
Hast wrought for them that flee to thee for shelter !

- In the presence of the children of men,
20 Thou hidest them in the secret of thy presence ;
Thou concealest them from the snares of man,
In a hiding-place from the strife of tongues.

- 21 Blessed be Jehovah, for he hath done wonderfully !
His tender love hath been a strong city to me.^k

- 22 But I, I said in my haste,
“ I am cut off from thine eyes ! ”

¹ “ Let the impious be brought to shame.” Here ends the prayer : what follows, to the end of the 18th verse, is the answer of the oracular voice. The sequel of the Psalm is the thanksgiving for the gracious answer. The versions read ירדך

^k “ The version of the Syriac de-

serves attention, which presents a remarkable variety of the text. הפלך לך חסידך must have been the reading of that interpreter : ‘ He hath set apart his saints for himself in a city of defence.’ See Psalm iv. 3 ; xvii. 7.”
HORSLEY.

Nevertheless, thou heardest my voice,
My supplication when I cried unto thee.

23 O love Jehovah, all ye his well-beloved.
Jehovah preserveth the faithful,
And abundantly requiteth the proud doer.

24 Be firm, and let your heart be steadfast,
All ye that hope in Jehovah.

EXPOSITION.

The first eight verses of this Psalm express the trust and confidence which the holy Jesus places in his heavenly Father, while he contemplates the near approach of the trying hour.¹ In the last of these verses he anticipates a triumph of joy, when the bitter conflict shall be over; when divine justice, satisfied with the suffering of the sinner's Surety, shall relent in pity at the affliction of the holy Victim, and accept the sacrifice: then the tender love of the Father, the sense of which was for a season to be withdrawn from this only-begotten Son, should return in all its wonted kindness;—return not to him only, but to all his redeemed people, in whose person he had sustained the stroke of the divine displeasure. When this should once be accomplished—when the dread permitted hour, in which the Lord of Glory should be delivered, as a guilty criminal, bound into the hands of his tormentors, should be at an end, their victim would be then released and placed in safety from their attacks; then would he rejoice and exult in the Father's love for ever. Thus "Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith," for the joy set before him, "prepares to endure the cross, despising the shame;" and "in the race set before us," we are directed "to look" to him, that we faint not under those chastisements of a loving Father, that may yet be necessary to make us "partakers of his holiness."

In the 9th and four following verses we have a description of this conflict set before us. The eye, the breath, the

¹ "Messiah prays for Deliverance from the Persecution of his Enemies." Bishop Horsley's title.

bowels, had been consumed with grief. We contemplate one that had spent his life in sorrow, and his years in sighing, till the human frame had sunk beneath the load of its miseries! All this clearly refers to Him, whom a later prophet describes as he saw him in his visions, "Many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men."

The language of the 11th and 12th verses may be illustrated without further comment by the words of the same prophet: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid, as it were, our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

The 13th verse places particularly before our eyes the awful night of the passion in the garden, when the chief priest and elders were taking counsel together against Jesus to put him to death. It was, we know, at this particular crisis, when, as our blessed Lord had intimated, all his friends "forsook him and fled, and he was left alone." It was a fact, in the circumstances of the visible sufferings of our Lord, that he fell a friendless individual into the hands of his enemies, deserted by all his followers; so that the Scripture was fulfilled, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered." So strong was the prevailing temptation of that sad hour, that Peter, whose recovered courage had induced him to follow his Master into the hall of the high priest, was wrought upon to deny him, and affirm with an oath, "I know not the man." This happened among living men; and we are led to conclude, that, at this season, all his guardian angels forsook him, forbidden to render assistance, that he, for the sins of his people, might be delivered up bound into the hand of his adversaries.

In the 14th and three following verses we have the prayer of faith. The humble Sufferer submits himself to his Father's will, and casts himself upon his goodness to support him in the dreadful conflict, and to overrule the designs of his malicious adversaries. It may seem hard to reconcile such expressions of weakness, and entire dependency, with the almighty power of the divine Redeemer.

But, though his Godhead must not be lost sight of, we are ever to bear in mind, that he did not put it forth, but submitted to all the infirmities of the lower nature which he had assumed. Therefore is he “brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” And with respect to the eternal Father, our Redeemer was to be truly a child of helpless man. “Though he were a son, yet he was to learn obedience by the things that he suffered, that, being made perfect, he might become the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him.”

The latter part of the 17th and the 18th verse, “Let the wicked,” or “the wicked shall be confounded, &c.” may be either considered as a prayer of the holy Priest, consigning by his righteous curse, according to the divine appointment, the impenitent wicked, and opposers of the work of redemption, to their deserved punishment; or rather, as an oracular voice assuring the righteous Sufferer of the final excision of the enemies of his person and of his cause.

In the 19th and following verses we hear again the voice of thanksgiving, and the triumphant Saviour encourages his followers, after his example, to trust and not be afraid; and in all their sufferings and adversities here on earth, to look unto him, and think of the joys of which he has taken possession for them, in those mansions of heavenly bliss, where he as their forerunner is entered.

“O, how great is thy goodness!” This is the good report of the promised land. The beautiful declaration of St. Peter is exactly parallel: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”^m

The 20th verse is the Redeemer’s anticipation of an answer to his prayer for his people while yet on their earthly pilgrimage. Compare his words in the xviith of John,

^m 1 Peter i. 3, 4.

"Father, keep through thine own power those whom thou hast given me."—"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." "Who are kept," says the Apostle, "through faith unto the salvation ready to be revealed in the last day."

They are described as fearing God, and fleeing to him for shelter; the usual figure in the Psalms for faith in the salvation of God. Admitted, through the communion of the Holy Ghost, into the secret manifestation of the divine Presence, which the world knoweth not of, they are preserved from the snares of the wicked, and from the strife of tongues. By which I understand the reasonings and disputations of the corrupters of the Gospel; "oppositions of science falsely so called," "perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds;" and all the delusions of impostors and enthusiasts; which have from time to time been brought forth with such artifice, and "deceivableness of unrighteousness," that, to use our Lord's words, "they would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." But it is not possible: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he doth show them his covenant."

In the 21st verse our Advocate blesses Jehovah for the wonders which his tender love has wrought for him and for his people. "He is a strong tower to all them that trust in him." Speaking of his own passion, he says, there had been a moment of despair, so the penalty of man's transgressions required, when all was hurry and confusion in his devoted mind, and he was suffered to feel, in the sudden dread that alarmed his soul, the fear of desertion. But his voice was heard at length, though it was the *sinner's Surety* that cried. And, risen from the dead, his voice encourages his people, the objects of the tender love of their reconciled Father, "to love Him who first loved them," and who will keep them and make them "more than conquerors" over all their foes. He bids them be of good courage, to dismiss their fears, and hope in Jehovah; reminding us of his gracious words respecting his sheep, in the days of his flesh, "My Father that gave them to me is greater than all; and none can pluck them out of my Father's hand."

PSALM XXXII.^a

- 1 BLESSED is he whose transgression^o is forgiven,^p and whose sin is covered :
- 2 Blessed is the man to whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity,^q
And in whose spirit there is no guile.
- 3 When I would have kept silence,^r my bones wasted through my groaning^s
All the day long :
- 4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me,
My moisture was turned into the drought of summer.

SELAH.

- 5 I would acknowledge to thee my sin, and cover not my guilt :
I said, I confess my yoke^t 'is' for my transgression before Jehovah.
And as for thee, thou didst bear^u the iniquity^x of my sin.

SELAH.

^a This Psalm is distinguished by a new title, לְדָוִד מִשְׁכִּיל, the particular meaning of which is not known for certain ; it comes, however, from a root that signifies *to instruct*.

^o פֶּשַׁע signifies either rebellion against a superior, or transgression of a law. Horsley renders "wilful crimes."

^p Literally, "is lifted from off him, and taken away."

^q עֲוֹן "guilt"—"depravity"—or "punishment." See Ps. xxxi. 11, and Isaiah xl. 2. Horsley renders "perverseness."

^r Compare xxxix. Ps.

^s "Roaring."

^t The term עֲלֵי in this place, in its common rendering, has perplexed translators not a little ; some of them, as Dimock and Green, have proposed to change it, upon conjecture, for another, כָּל : yet it is sufficiently plain that it was found in the ancient copies, from which the Septuagint and Vulgate

were rendered : the former has κατ' ἐμὸν—the latter, *adversum me*. I believe the mistake has been the considering it as a preposition with the pronoun suffix, instead of a noun in the sense of a *yoke*. What we are to understand by the term עֲלֵי פֶשַׁעִים, "yoke of transgressions," we learn from Lam. i. 14, where it evidently means a yoke formed to repress and punish a refractory animal. "The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand ; they are wreathed, and come up upon my neck : he hath made my strength to fall, the Lord hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up."

^u This is a frequent sense of נָשָׂא נָדָר עֲוֹנִי מִנִּשְׁוֹן Gen. iv. 13.

^x Or, "punishment." עֲוֹן signifies, not only guilt, perverseness, depravity, but also punishment. See note q.

- 6 "In reference to this, shall every object of thy loving kindness
make his supplication⁷ before thee;⁸
At the season of his finding pity.⁹
In the inundation of many waters
They shall not reach unto him."

- 7 Thou art my shelter from the trouble that oppresseth me.
Thou dost compass me about with shouts of deliverance.

- 8 I will teach thee, I will direct thee in the way that thou goest; ^b
I will guide thee with mine eye.

- 9 Be not ye like a horse,
Like a mule without sense.

Without bridle and headstall his trappings to constrain him,
He will not keep near thee.

- 10 Many are the wounds of the refractory; ^c
But him that yieldeth himself to Jehovah, kindness shall en-
compass.

⁷ If we take the verb in its strict sense, we should render thus: "For this shall he mediate before thee for every object of love." This sixth verse is certainly the answer of an oracular voice: or, if we make *וְהוֹדָה* the nominative case, we must render:

For this shall every beloved one make supplication to thee.
In the time of his finding pity, in the inundation of many waters:

They shall not reach unto him.

⁸ Or, "make his appeal before thee."

⁹ *וְהוֹדָה* *Misericordia, teneritudo ani-*
mi, ab Arab. *وَدَّ*, *Sm. Lex. Heb.*

^b Will look out the way for thee, as a guide leading an animal along a dangerous road.

^c We perceive in this place the exact idea of *וְהוֹדָה* in its allusion to the restive, disobedient, unyielding, ungovernable mule or horse. It is opposed to *וְהוֹדָה* to *confide in*, to *yield to*, or *succumb*, as the gentle beast fully confides and yields himself to the management of his guide. Parkhurst gives to *וְהוֹדָה* the sense of *hanging close, clinging*, but mentions no authority. In the Arabian language it signifies to *fall prostrate on the face*.

EXPOSITION. .

The meaning of the two first verses of this Psalm is sufficiently clear: it celebrates the happy state of the pardoned and justified sinner, who, under the guidance of the spirit of grace, has been taught to know himself, and without disguise has confessed his sins and obtained mercy. Had there

been any doubt respecting the meaning of these two verses, the Apostle's quotation would have ascertained it beyond all dispute; for, when speaking of a sinner's justification by faith, and describing its nature,—“now, to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt;—but to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, *his faith is counted for righteousness;*” he immediately adds, “Even as David, also, describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; saying, *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*”^d

A question, however, may arise, whether David speaks here in his own character, describing the mercy he had found, or whether, as usual in these spiritual songs, he is made by the prophetic Spirit to personate the Messiah, and to speak in his character. In our authorised translation the former is evidently the supposition: our translators have accordingly accommodated their version of the three following verses, to express the distress of a sinner's conscience before he has obtained the blessedness described in the two foregoing verses. But, from what I conceive to be the meaning of the expressions, I have been led to prefer the latter supposition—that the Saviour is in this Psalm, also, to be considered as the leading speaker. In the three first verses he is to be regarded as the great Prophet of his church, teaching the way of salvation. Having described the blessedness of the penitent believer, he goes on to contrast with this blessedness his own wretchedness which he was to suffer in the days of his flesh, and thus is led to describe the chastisement by which this peace was procured for his people—“the stripes” by which “they are healed.” Upon this hypothesis I would explain the third and fourth verses by the opening of the XXXIXth Psalm, but confess great difficulty in the construction of what follows. “When I would have been silent, &c.” “I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle,” &c. He was silent when the penalty of his people's trans-

^d Romans iv. 4, &c.

gressions, imputed to him, was exacted—"It was exacted, and he was made answerable, yet he opened not his mouth,"^e or, "he was brought near and he was questioned, yet he opened not his mouth." And while he bears the sins of the many sons he was bringing to glory, as we often find it described in these Psalms, his human nature, exhausted with sufferings, seems ready to sink beneath the burden. All that the *sinner's Surety* could do was to make confession of the sin for which he was to answer: his imputed guilt he covers not. As the devoted victim that is to be delivered up to the tormentor till he has paid the utmost farthing of the debt, he could well assume the language of the prophet which we have quoted in the notes: "The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hands, they are wreathed and come up upon my neck: he hath made my strength to fall—the Lord hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up." Thus was the holy Lamb of God delivered up into the hands of sinful men and evil spirits—thus fell the spotless soul of Jesus, laden with the guilt of his people, into the hands of "him that hath the power of death;" for the just Judge exacted the punishment of his sin—the sin for which he had made himself answerable, "that God might be just, and at the same time the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

In the latter part of the 5th verse I understand the Church to be the interlocutor—"and thou didst bear," &c.

The term our translators render *godly*, certainly signifies one that is the object of the tender love of the Father of his special grace: as St. Paul speaks, "for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." The Saviour shall effectually mediate for every one of these before God; for he is the propitiation for their sins. "At the season of his finding pity;" that is, either the Redeemer himself, when, as the sinner's Surety, he is released on their justification. I have however preferred a different construction, and understand the Saviour to be the object on whom the believer, invited by the preaching of the cross, calls in the day of his grace, and is saved.

^e Lowth's Isaiah.

“The inundation of many waters,” if we suffer ourselves to be led by the frequent usage of this metaphor in Scripture, will mean those inroads of violent enemies and “deceitful workers,” who were in the latter days to threaten the destruction of Christ’s church, and which should seem for a time to have overwhelmed all true religion : but “the foundation of God standeth sure.” That company of faithful people which is acknowledged to be the mystic body of Christ, are ever preserved amid these inundations of many waters : for this the church renders praise, and anticipates the triumphant songs of her final victory over every foe.

From the 8th verse to the end, we have the address of the great Head of the church to his followers : he instructs them how, taking his yoke upon them, they are to learn of him, and find peace and comfort in their journey through the wilderness of this life. All depends upon their meek submission to their heavenly Guide. If gentle persuasion will accomplish the purpose, painful restraints will be spared. The child of God who will yield himself up in the patience of hope to God, shall meet with nothing but caresses ; but the rebellious and disobedient son must expect the heavy chastisements of the careful parent, visiting his offences with a rod, and his sins with scourges, in very faithfulness causing him to be afflicted, that he may be kept in that narrow way that leadeth unto everlasting life. “And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction ; then he showeth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures : but if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.”^f

^f Job xxxvi. 8—12.

PSALM XXXIII.^g

BE glad in Jehovah, and exult, ye righteous ;
Yea, raise a joyful sound, all ye that are upright in heart.

- 1 O Sing, ye righteous, unto Jehovah ;
Praise beseemeth well the upright.
- 2 Celebrate Jehovah on the harp,
Laud him on the ten-stringed lute.
- 3 Sing ye to him a new song,
Sound the pleasant psalm with the loud music.^h
- 4 For the word of Jehovah is right,
And all his deeds are faithful.
- 5 He hath loved justice and equity :
The earth is filled with the loving kindness of Jehovah.
- 6 By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made,
And all their hosts by the spirit of his mouth.
- 7 He collected the waters of the sea as in a vessel,ⁱ
He laid up the deep as in a treasury.
- 8 Let all the earth reverence Jehovah,
Let the dwellers on the productive soil fear him :
- 9 For he spake, and it was :
He commanded, and it stood firm.^k
- 10 Jehovah hath dissipated the counsels of the heathen,
And hath frustrated the designs of the nations.
- 11 The counsel of Jehovah standeth firm for ever,
The designs of his heart from generation to generation.

^g We find no title to this Psalm in the Hebrew.

^h "With joyful notes play skilfully on the tabor." "Strike sweetly with shouts of triumph." F. and S.

ⁱ Reading with the ancient versions כנאך

^k That is, He spake, and at his word the earth came into existence. At his command, too, it was that the הבלי the tillable or habitable earth, the dry land, stood firm in the midst of the waters.

- 12 Blessed is the nation whose Elohim is Jehovah,
That people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance.
- 13 From the heavens Jehovah hath beheld,
He hath seen all the children of men ;
- 14 From the place of his habitation he hath looked
Upon all the inhabitants of the earth :
- 15 He who formed the heart of each,
He who understandeth all their doings.
- 16 No king is saved by the multitude of a host,
The warrior escapeth not by greatness of strength.
- 17 Vain is the horse for safety,
He cannot by his great strength deliver.
- 18 Behold the eye of Jehovah is on them that fear him,
On them that hope in his tender love.
- 19 To preserve their souls from death,
To keep them alive in famine.
- 20 Our soul hath waited for Jehovah ;
He is our help and our shield.
- 21 Our heart rejoiceth in him,
And we rely on his holy name.
- 22 Let thy tender love, O Jehovah, be upon us,
Since we fix our hope on thee.

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley, who has only left us a few notes on this Psalm, seems to have pointed out its true subject: he entitles it "A Thanksgiving of the Church triumphant in the latter ages, for her final Deliverance, by the Overthrow of

Antichrist and his Armies." Of "the first verse," he remarks that, "calling upon the justified and upright, in particular, to sing unto Jehovah, shows that they are exclusively interested in the subject of this Psalm. The deliverance which it celebrates is the deliverance of them only."

We may consider the great Redeemer as calling upon his justified and sanctified people, in this Psalm, to celebrate the praises of God, and to anticipate the glorious victory in the final conflict of the church with her earthly enemies. I would only remark further, on the address that forms the introduction of the Psalm, that the call to unite instrumental with vocal music, in the praise of God, when we consider by whom and to whom the exhortation is given, not only shows the lawfulness of this practice under the New Testament, which some good Christians have disputed, but seems to commend and to call for the practice.

"The word of Jehovah is right." Ver. 4. "The event brought about, by God's special interposition, his work in conformity to the word of his promise, confirms the truth of his promises." The same almighty Word that made the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land, is contemplated as exerting itself with the same invincible power in the accomplishment of the designs of his providence, before declared to his church, which had been exerted in the creation: therefore, all the feeble efforts and designs of wicked men against the people and cause of Christ must prove abortive, and God will fulfil all his promises: the elect, whom he hath chosen, must be blessed. (Ver. 12.) Let them, then, confide on his ever-watchful providence: he knows the conflict in which his church is engaged, and sees the heathen rage, and the nations attempting the vain thing against the Lord and against his anointed. The Spirit of prophecy sees the kings of the earth with their armies, gathering together to battle, in the great day of the Lord.

The language, indeed, of holy defiance in the 16th and 17th verses, is applicable to many of the partial conflicts which have taken place in different ages, between "the seed of the serpent" and "the seed of the woman." Often, already, have kings and their armies fled before the rising

interests of Christ's kingdom ; but a greater conflict and more decisive victory is one day to be expected, as we have seen in the former Psalms. The final victory of Christ over his earthly and spiritual enemies, and the consequent establishment of his promised kingdom, is the theme that runs throughout the page of prophecy. The partial deliverances which his people now receive from His staying hand, who rebukes the madness of the people, as he rules the waves of the sea when they rage horribly, are only in anticipation, and vouchsafed as an earnest of the victory he will one day give.

His justified servants are therefore to trust on his all-seeing providence, assured of his love, and waiting for his appearing, who has said, that, in the mean time, while his church is still militant here on earth, "he will never leave us nor forsake us"—"our bread shall be given us, our water shall be sure."

The famine mentioned in the 19th verse, as Bishop Horsley has remarked, may "allude to a famine of God's word, which may prevail in the height of Antichrist's persecutions." As we read in the Revelation of St. John: "And to the woman there were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent'."

This reliance on the keeping of Jehovah, while the church is still oppressed by persecution or corruption, and is still praying for his kingdom to come, we are taught to express in the three last verses of the sacred song before us—praying that his tender, parental love may be manifested upon us.

¹ Chap. xii. 14.

PSALM XXXIV.^m

- 1 **ש** I WILL bless Jehovah at all times,ⁿ
Continually shall his praise be in my mouth.
- 2 **ב** My soul shall make her boast of Jehovah :
The poor afflicted shall hear and rejoice.
- 3 **ג** Oh magnify Jehovah with me,
And let us extol his name together.
- 4 **ד** I sought Jehovah, and he heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.
- 5 **ה** Look unto him and be ye gladdened,^o
^pAnd your faces shall not be made ashamed :
- 22 **ו** ^qFor Jehovah redeemeth the soul of his servants,
And none that take shelter in him shall be condemned.
- 6 **ז** This afflicted man^r called upon Jehovah, and he heard him ;
He saved him from all his distresses.
- 7 **ח** The angel of Jehovah encamping,
Surroundeth them that fear him, and will deliver them.
- 8 **ט** O taste and see how good is Jehovah ;
Blessed is the man that taketh shelter in him.

^m The title given by the Jewish editors to this Psalm, like most of the other titles they have thought proper to affix, has evidently no connexion whatever with the subject: they have called it, "A Psalm of David, when he changed his Behaviour before Abimelech, and he sent him away."

ⁿ "In every season;" i. e. in all circumstances—in every posture of my affairs.

^o "And ye shall be enlightened."
HORSLEY. Compare Isaiah lx. 1.
"Arise, shine, for thy light is come."

^p The Septuagint translation is in

the second person.

^q Here the hemistich, which should begin with the letter Vau, is wanting in the received Hebrew text, and was wanting, it should seem, in that from which the Septuagint was rendered. A supernumerary verse, however, is found at the end of the Psalm, which Kennicott has removed, after prefixing the wanted letter to supply the deficiency.

^r "Πῦ δεικτικῶς, as Kennicott rightly observes; and so the LXX. οὗτος." HORSLEY.

- 9 ם Fear Jehovah, O ye his saints ;
For there is no want to them that fear him.
- 10 ך The young lions* want and suffer hunger ;
But those who seek Jehovah want no good thing.
- 11 ל Come, ye children, hearken to me,
I will teach you the fear of Jehovah.
- 12 מ Who is the man that desireth life,
And wisheth to see days of prosperity ?
- 13 נ Let him refrain his tongue from evil,
His lips from speaking guile.
- 14 ס Let him depart from evil and do good ;
Let him seek peace and pursue it.
- 15 ע The eye of Jehovah is on the righteous,
And his ear 'is open' to their cry.
- 16 ף The face of Jehovah is against the workers of iniquity,
To cut off their memory from the earth.
- 17 צ 'The righteous' cried—Jehovah heard,
And hath delivered them from all their distresses.
- 18 ק Jehovah is near to the broken-hearted,
And will save such as be of a contrite spirit.
- 19 ר Many are the ills of the Just One,
But Jehovah delivereth him from them all.
- 20 ש He keepeth all his bones,
Not one of them is broken.
- 21 ת Evil slayeth the wicked one,
And they that hate the Just One shall be held guilty.

* The versions appear either to have read כבירים or to have under- stood כפירים as a figurative expres- sion.

EXPOSITION.

I acquiesce entirely in the title that Bishop Horsley has prefixed to this Psalm. "Messiah exhorts to holiness and trust in God, by the example of his own deliverance."¹ With this intimation of its subject, the meaning of the Psalm is sufficiently plain. The divine Saviour, risen from the dead, "in the midst of the congregation," sings praise unto God, as the great deliverer—his great deliverer, when he sunk in death as the sinner's Surety: he had raised him from the dead, and seated him at his own right hand, engaging to make his foes his footstool. These are "glad tidings for the meek;" as the term imports, for "the spiritually afflicted," "the poor in spirit." They are accordingly invited to join with their Redeemer in his song of praise, for that deliverance from the horrid fears which had overwhelmed him, when he entered the contest for them. They may well join in the triumph, for the fruits of the victory are their own.

We are invited, in the 5th verse, to look up to our reconciled God in Christ, and receive joy of heart from the light of his countenance; "and hope," as St. Paul also says, "shall never make ashamed;" or disappoint the confident boast of the redeemed sinner's heart. "He is passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation." He that was "wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities," was heard in his distress, though, according to the tenour of the everlasting covenant, he could not be heard till divine justice was satisfied with the chastisement that was to procure the peace of his people.

¹ Bishop Horsley observes: "The matter of this Psalm has not the least connexion with the subject to which the Hebrew title refers it."—"It is an excellent remark of Mr. Hutchinson's, though some caution and judgment may be requisite in the application of it, that, 'though many of the ideas (in the Psalms) be conveyed under types or borrowed names, yet any one sentence which is applicable to the true David (i. e. to the Messiah), and to none else, determines the Psalm to that David.' The 20th verse of this Psalm, as Mr. Hutchinson observes, taken literally, is applicable to the true David, and to none else."—Vol. i. p. 71.

But great, henceforth (verse 7th), is the peace and security of his people. They are the objects of His guardian care, who sitteth upon the throne of Providence. His angels, "sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation," are also commissioned to keep watch over them in all their ways: for among the blessings that await those who come to the heavenly Zion, are reckoned "an innumerable company of angels," who are employed in providing for the external welfare of the people of God. But more than this, they are admitted to the holy communion of God himself. "O taste, and see," is the Saviour's pressing invitation, "how good is Jehovah," to the believer fleeing for refuge to his Saviour God.

His saints, that is, his consecrated servants, consecrated to him by the sprinkled blood and anointing spirit of Christ, they shall experience no want (verse 9th), while they walk in his fear. Godliness has, indeed, the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come; and therefore temporal wants are not excluded from the promise, though spiritual wants, for their importance, ought to engross the chief thoughts of the worshipper.

Even in temporal things we often see the truth of the 10th verse. Although the discipline exercised over the children of promise, may render intricate to human view, the dispensation of Providence, as it respects the saints; yet the destitute children of God are sometimes seen to pass their time in peace and quietness; while "the young lions," those who seem best adapted by their strength, their abilities, and their wealth, to make their way in life, are disappointed, unsatisfied, cut short, or reduced to want and shame. But it is in spiritual things especially that this promise is true. The happy soul has bread to eat that the world knoweth not of. He that eateth of the bread of life, afforded to him in Christ, "shall never hunger."—"He that drinketh of the water that he will give him, shall never thirst."

The 11th and three following verses are addressed by the great Master to his disciples. Would his followers enjoy the present life, and escape those causes of sorrow which so much embitter the days of numbers of mankind? If this be their object, they must be more particular than other

men, in their conduct and conversation. Because, in the first place, they are hated by the world, and their errors will meet with less indulgence than the faults of others: they must expect a severer measure of retribution. And, in the second place, they are to expect at the hand of God, a more strict scrutiny of their lives and conversation, in order to the infliction of present chastisement. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I visit you for your sins." "When we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

This inspection of Jehovah over the righteous, that is, the justified, is pointed out in the 15th verse. It may cost them, indeed, some present trouble, to stand from day to day before the judgment-seat of God: but his ear is ever open to their cry for mercy. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." How different is the inspection over the impenitent wicked! No corrective discipline is administered here: Jehovah has set his face against them to exterminate them. The immediate troubles of the justified may be many, but they will awaken prayer, and fervent prayer will obtain deliverance in all the distresses that their sin and folly may bring upon them. For, though in many things we offend all, and can scarcely hope to escape frequent chastisement, in a family of which the discipline is so holy; yet He is very merciful and compassionate that administers that discipline. "The broken heart and contrite spirit" of an offending child will always prevail to turn aside the fatherly displeasure of his reconciled God.

In the conclusion of the Psalm, we are told, "Many are the ills, or injuries, which the Just One receives:" that is, which the Saviour receives in his mystic members. Many will be the evils which the subtilty of the devil or man worketh against the people of Christ, besides those troubles that proceed from the sources above specified: but from all these the mystical body of Christ will be also delivered. Nor shall they ever be able to separate between Christ and his people: they will "in all these things be found more than conquerors, through Him that hath loved them."

This I conceive to be the meaning of the figurative lan-

guage, "He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken." And it was, perhaps, to indicate this same truth, that corresponding to the type of the paschal lamb, the circumstances of the death of the blessed Jesus upon the cross, contrary to the usual practice in that punishment, was so ordered, that "a bone of him should not be broken." The wicked one means, I believe, in this passage, the great opposer of Christ's kingdom, Antichrist, "with the man of sin," at the head of the great apostacy: his sin and the sin of his followers will be their ruin: they hate the Just One, who is the righteousness of his people: they oppose the doctrines of the gracious covenant: they will not submit to God's righteousness; therefore, they will "die in their sins," and be condemned according to their works in the judgment of the last day.

PSALM XXXV.^u

- 1 **CONTEND** thou, Jehovah, with them that contend with me,
Fight against them that fight against me :
- 2 **Grasp** the shield and the buckler,
And stand up for my help :
- 3 **Draw forth** the spear and the sword to meet my pursuers ;
Say to my soul, I am thy salvation.
- 4 They shall be confounded and ashamed that sought my soul ;
They shall be turned back and put to confusion that devised my harm.
- 5 They shall be as the chaff before the wind ;
While an angel of Jehovah driveth them :
- 6 Their way shall be dark and slippery,
While an angel of Jehovah pursueth them.

^u This Psalm is also ascribed to David.

- 7 Surely in vain have they hidden for me their net ;
In vain have they digged a pit for my soul.
- 8 A destruction* shall come that he is not aware of ;
In the net that he hid, his 'feet' shall be taken,
Into that very destruction he falleth.
- 9 Therefore my soul shall rejoice in Jehovah,
It shall joy in his salvation.
- 10 All my bones shall exclaim,
Jehovah! who is like unto thee?
Delivering the afflicted from him that was prevailing over him ;
The afflicted and helpless from him that was preying upon
him.
- 11 Corrupt witnesses will stand up 'against me,'
They will question me of things that I knew not.
- 12 They will reward me evil for good,
'Seeking' to deprive me of life.†
- 13 But for me, in their griefs, my clothing was sackcloth,
I humbled my soul with fasting,
And my prayer was turned on my bosom.‡
- 14 I went as though he had been my friend and my brother,
I bowed down mournfully as one that bewaileth a mother.
- 15 But in my calamity they rejoiced and were gathered together,
They were gathered against me, insulting me—
- 16 Even those whom I knew not reproached^a me and ceased not.

* "Procella cum fragore erumpens."

† "Docent nos Syrus et Chaldaeus scriptum olim fuisse non שָׁכַחְתִּי sed שָׁכַחְתִּי orbitatem parant animæ meæ; i.e. parant me meumque semen extinguere." Houbigant. Some, from the Chaldee, supply יִבְקֶשׁוּ which the verse seems to require.

‡ "Buxtorf asserts that when the Jews prayed in their synagogues they

covered their faces."—"When the orientals pray seriously, in grief, they hide their face in their bosom: and to this custom the Psalmist here alludes. Rabbi Levi, Dathe, and others, explain it in like manner." Boothroyd.

^a קָרַע *proscidit verbis, laceravit famam alicujus* קָרַע in 11. verbis contumeliosis *proscidit*.

In my halting^b they cruelly derided me,^c
They ground their teeth at me.

17 Lord, how long wilt thou look on?
Rescue my soul from their destructions,
^dMy deserted spirit from the lions.

18 I will give thanks to thee in the great congregation,
Amid the numerous people will I praise thee.

19 Let not my false enemies rejoice over me;
Those that hate me without a cause, wink with their eyes.

20 Truly, to me^e they speak peace;
And, concerning those that are returned^f to the earth,

21 They devise deceitful words;
And then they open wide their mouths against me:

They exclaimed, Aha! alia!
Our eye hath seen!

22 Thou hast seen, O Jehovah, be not silent;
O Lord, be not far from me.

23 Arise and awake for my judgment,
For my cause, my Elohim and my Lord.

24 Judge me in thy righteousness, Jehovah my Elohim,
And let them not rejoice over me;

25 Let them not say in their hearts, Aha! so would we have it;^g
Let them not say, We have devoured him.

26 They shall be ashamed and confounded together,
They shall be clothed with shame that were glad at my hurt,
And with disgrace, that magnified themselves over me.

^b רָחַץ *claudicavit*.

^c "They jeered me with their
jeers." HORSLEY.

^d See note on Ps. xxii. 20.

^e For אֲנִי some of the ancient ver-

sions read אֲנִי which Horsley approves.

^f Or, "that rest in quiet in the
earth." רָבַע *rediiit, reversus est*,
adeoque, *post reditum quievit*. SIMON.

^g Aha, our soul—our very wish.

- 27 They shall shout and rejoice that delight in my righteousness;^b
 And they shall exclaim continually, Jehovah be magnified,
 Who hath delighted in the rewarding of his servant.

Ay, my tongue shall talk of thy righteousness,
 Of thy praise all the day long.

^b "My justification." HORSLEY. me in my rights by the sentence of the
 Perhaps, rather, "the vindication of judge."

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm is evidently a prayer of the Mediator, and should be adopted in our devotions as his language. Its subject is very similar to some of the foregoing Psalms. In the three first verses, the Messiah, contemplating the conflict in which he must engage to redeem and complete the salvation of his people, calls for the divine assistance under the metaphor of a warrior that comes in complete armour to the rescue of one ready to be overpowered by his foes. To this situation, as we are often admonished, was the soul of the divine Redeemer reduced, in the hands of the powers of darkness. He fell bound in the bands of death; but "it was impossible that he should be holden of them;" and in the very article of death, when Satan and his powers thought their victory secure, they found the destruction of their kingdom.

The overthrow and shameful rout of these infernal hosts is finely depicted in the three following verses; and in the 7th and 8th we remark the frustration of all the policy and deep-laid stratagems of Satan and his suborned instruments, and see them turned to their own destruction.

To persecute to death the holy man that had withstood all their efforts, seems to have been the point at which all the schemes of these evil spirits were directed; but the success of these schemes was fatal to themselves. In his cross and death the Redeemer triumphed over them: and, however he entered into the regions of the dead, he left them not till he had spoiled principalities and powers, and led his captivity captive. For this deliverance, as received by

him from the Father, when, as man, appearing for man, he died, and was quickened in the spirit and rose again, he gives thanks unto God in the 9th and 10th verses. The expression, "all my bones," may have a double reference—to the person of our Lord now eased from torture—and to the members of his mystical body, who severally share in the Saviour's victory.

The 11th verse describes the extremities to which the holy Victim had been reduced. His enemies seemed to have prevailed over him, and to have gotten the object of their pursuit into their hands: like ravenous beasts, had begun to tear their helpless prey, who was encompassed in their toils. But at this moment it is, that the "destruction cometh that he is not aware of: in the net that he hid, are his own feet taken."

The Psalm next passes from the catastrophe that awaits the spiritual persecutors of the Messiah, to describe the animosities of wicked men against his sacred person, in the day of his distress. The suborning of false witnesses by the chief priests and Pharisees is first pointed out. The great ingratitude of the Jews in thus treating the kind and benevolent Jesus, is mainly insisted upon in the verses that follow. The tender feelings and compassion of Him who wept over Jerusalem, and who through all his life had discovered the kindest sympathies for his fellow men, is strikingly contrasted, in the 13th and three following verses, with the cruel mockery and savage conduct of the Jews to our Lord, in the last scenes of his earthly sufferings.

In the 17th verse, the Redeemer prays to be released from his bodily sufferings; and from the lions, that is, the evil spirits that were to seize upon his separate spirit, and convey their prisoner to the mansions of death. His prayer at length is heard; and in the great congregation of the saints in paradise, he renders praise to God.

The risen Saviour, now seated at God's right hand till all his foes are to be made his footstool, glances, in his intercessions for his church, at a new description of enemies. These false or lying adversaries profess to honour Christ, and his saints who have finished their labours; but they are

deceivers, and their hearts are hostile to the cause of Christ, and the doctrines which the Apostles and holy martyrs taught. And at length they throw off the mask, and openly rejoice in the supposed extinction of Christ's holy religion.

Guided by subsequent prophecies, we discover that the great Advocate has in view, first, the long period of apostate and popish bigotry; and, lastly, the infidelity of the anti-christian nations of the last days; of that infidelity, which, at this present hour, except in some favoured spots, seems to be triumphing over the ruined institutions of Christianity.

In the 22d and three following verses, we have the Mediator's prayer against these boasting enemies: a prayer, which, if our exposition of the Psalm be right, particularly applies to the circumstances of the present times.

The consequence of these prayers, and the final issue of the contest, is stated in the 26th and 27th verses; and, agreeably to all the prophecies on this subject, we learn that the triumphs of these last adversaries, though much vaunted, and though their victories for a moment seem to be complete, are suddenly and completely frustrated, to the shame and eternal ruin of their instruments.

At this epocha the promised kingdom comes, and they who retain the faith once delivered to the saints—faith in the righteousness of God the Saviour, they are then, with him, partakers of the glorious inheritance. The song of the church triumphant, at the opening of the seventh seal in the vision of the Apocalypse, anticipates the exact fulfilment of this prophecy: "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."

The last verse is perhaps spoken in the character of a believer receiving this testimony.

PSALM XXXVI.ⁱ

1 THE apostacy of the wicked 'one' is on my mind.¹

There is no fear of God before his eyes;¹

2 For he hath flattered himself in his own sight.

So that he discovers not his iniquity to be hateful,^m

3 The words of his mouth are vanity and delusion.

He hath ceased to understand and to do good;ⁿ

4 He deviseth vanity upon his couch.

He setteth himself on a course that is not good;

He abhorreth not evil.

5 O Jehovah, thy tender love 'reacheth' to the heavens,

Thy faithfulness unto the skies.

6 Thy righteousness 'is' like the mighty mountains,

Thy judgments 'are like' the great deep.

7 Thou, Jehovah, preservest man and beast.

ⁱ The Hebrew title is **לִמְנַצַּח לַעֲבֹד יְהוָה לְדוֹד**

^k Or, "An oracle of apostacy has the wicked in his heart."—"An oracle of wickedness has the ungodly in his heart." Geseñius.

^l For the omission of **נָאִם** see Lowth. Bishop Horsley has remarked, "If **נָאִם** might be taken here as a noun denoting oracular advice in general, or advice pretending to oracular authority, without reference to any particular oracle, given upon any particular occasion (and so it is taken by Arias Montanus), the passage will admit an easy interpretation, without any other emendation than the change of **לְבִי** for **לִבִּי** which has the authority of the LXX. Vulg. Syr. and three MSS. Thus 'The oracular advice of the apostate is to the impious in the innermost of his heart;' i.e. the maxims of the apostate are deeply rooted in the heart of the impious." Or thus: "רשע the apostate, i.e. the devil,

נָאִם לְרָשָׁע solemnly affirms to the impious man within his heart (i.e. the devil assures him by secret suggestions), that there is no fear, i.e. no cause of fear. God (after these suggestions) is not at all before his eyes." Or we may take the text as it stands, **נָאִם** He said, the prophetic David, the perverseness, prevarication, or rebellion of the wicked, **בְּקֶרֶב לִבִּי** is in the midst of my heart, i.e. it engrosses and fixes my attention. Compare the frequent usage of the Hebrew **לִב**.

^m Horsley translates these lines: "For he giveth things a fair appearance to himself, in his own eyes, so that he discovers not his own iniquity, to hate it."

ⁿ "To understand the oracles of God and to rejoice the heart with glad tidings." Or, "He hath deserted or voluntarily omits the study."—"Οὐκ ἠθέλησεν ἀκούειν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ." LXX.

How abundant^o is thy tender love, O Elohim!

And the children of men shall take shelter in the shadow of
thy wings.

8 They shall be satisfied with the fatness of thy house,
And thou wilt give them to drink of the river of thy pleasures.

9 For with thee is the fountain of life;
From thy light we see light.^p

10 Extend thy tender love towards them that know thee,
And thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

11 Let not the foot of pride approach me,
And let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

12 There! they have fallen! the workers of vanity;
They are cast down, and are not able to rise.

^o Literally, How heavy in weight!

^p "Thy light is the light we see."
But we should remark that the phrase

אֱרֹאֲרָא like ḥpāw φάος, signifies
to live or enjoy life.

EXPOSITION.

The spiritual David is the speaker in this Psalm; and though the description of the wicked one in the four first verses, may be considered as characteristic of the enemies of Christ, or rather of the apostates from his holy religion in every age; yet I believe "the falling away," which was to precede the Redeemer's second coming, and the wicked one, who was in these latter ages to be manifested, is the grand object in view; and with the final excision of the Antichristian faction the Psalm closes.

The Mediator is contemplating this last mortal foe to his church and people. This apostate is not afraid of God, because he can flatter himself that he is a deserving and virtuous character: and this self-flattery has been the cause of every apostacy from revealed religion. The Pharisee was by this emboldened to refuse submission to the righteousness of God. This, too, has been the grand fomentor of the Romish gotry, and of the doctrine of the merit of works

in all its modifications: and equally built on the presumption of the excellency of human virtue, is the proud neglect of the institutions of the Gospel by the modern politician. At the very time that the standard of morals has been evidently low, and the indulgence of the most detestable crimes notorious, it is wonderful, in the case of all these apostates, how they could still support the mask, and delude themselves and others with their vaunted boasts of moral or political virtues.

But He that appreciates better the characters of men, has in the four first verses of this Psalm drawn the true picture of these proud apostates and vain deceivers.

Our great advocate next sets before our eyes, in the 5th and 6th verses, that dispensation of the grace of God, from which these apostates have fallen, or for which they have substituted their corrupted Christianity or infidel philosophy. According to the Gospel scheme, how magnificent is the display of divine pity and love towards the sinner, and of the faithfulness of Jehovah to perform what his love has engaged in the covenant of his grace! How great is the display of righteousness and judgment in the method of a sinner's justification through the atonement in the blood of Christ! What mighty results from the everlasting decrees of God!

As the Creator and preserver of the universe, the great Jehovah's care is extended over all his creatures, as the 7th verse declares: but the tender love and rich and abundant grace of God, which opens a place of shelter to the penitent believer, is what commands our chief admiration. A metaphorical description, very frequent in Scripture, follows, in the 8th and 9th verses, of the supply of spiritual sustenance and holy joy which the believer finds in communion with his reconciled God in Christ.

In the 10th verse our Advocate prays that this love, and God's righteous vindication of his people, may still be manifested towards his faithful followers, who have not joined the apostacy—that they may continue to experience more and more of the unsearchable riches of his grace. He then (ver. 11) prays for them as his mystical body, that they may be kept from that pride of heart which distinguishes the

apostates, and from all the machinations of the wicked one: and he finally anticipates the answer of his prayers in the sudden overthrow of all the enemies and corrupters of his church.

PSALM XXXVII.

N

- 1 VEX not thyself on account of evil doers,
Neither be envious at the workers of iniquity ;
For they shall soon be burnt up as grass,
2 And shall wither as the green herbage.^a

ב

- 3 Yield up thyself to Jehovah, and do that which is good,
Abide^r on earth, and feed^s in confidence :
4 Delight thyself in Jehovah,^t
And he will grant thee the desires of thine heart.

ג

- 5 Commit^u thy way unto Jehovah ;
Rely on him, and he will execute ;
6 And he will bring forth thy righteousness as the light,
And thy judgment as the brightness of noon.

ד

- 7 Repose^x on Jehovah, and wait patiently on him.

.

Vex not thyself because of him who prospers in his course,
Because of the man who executeth evil devices.

^a Bishop Horsley renders these two lines,

" For suddenly, like hay, shall they be mown
down,
And like the verdure of grass they shall wither."

^r Or, perhaps, "rest quietly." See Simon, and compare the Arab. *سكن* *quievit*.

^s "Pasce te" — "oblecte te." — SIMON.

^t Perhaps better, "Make up thy happiness in Jehovah."

^u See Parkhurst.

^x "Be still to Jehovah, acquiesce in his measures."

י

- 8 Cease from wrath, let anger go,
Vex not thyself only to 'thy' hurt ;
9 For the evil doers shall be cut off,
And they that wait upon Jehovah shall inherit the earth.

י

- 10 Yet a little while, and the WICKED ONE is not ;
Ay, thou shalt notice his place, but he is no more :
11 And then shall the meek inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

י

- 12 The WICKED 'ONE' hath plotted against the JUST 'ONE,'
And grinded his teeth upon him :
13 The Lord will laugh at him,
For he hath seen that his day is coming.

י

- 14 The wicked have drawn their sword and bent their bow,
To cast down the meek and helpless, to slay the upright in
heart :
15 Their sword shall go through their own heart,
And their bow shall be broken.

ז

- 16 Better 'are' the few of the JUST 'ONE,'
Than the great multitude of the wicked ;
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken ;
17 But Jehovah supporteth the righteous.

י

- 18 Jehovah ordaineth the days' of the upright,
And their inheritance shall be for ever :

^י "Depositeth their days," lays them up in safety for them : for such is the original idea of יָדַע Compare

" וַדַּע fut. יָדַע *posuit, collocavit, deposuit, reposuit asservendam rem ut*

- 19 They shall not be confounded in the season of adversity,
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

ו

- 25-20 But the wicked shall perish,
Even the enemies of Jehovah as the fat of lambs ;
21 They consumed away as smoke,
And their seed beg their bread.^a

ו

- 22 The WICKED ONE is in debt, and doth not pay,^a
But the JUST ONE is generous and munificent :
26 From day to day is he generous and lendeth,
And his seed is blessed.^b

ו

- 24 When from Jehovah are the steps of a man ;
They are established, and he delighteth in his way :^c
25 When he falls he shall not be thrown prostrate,
For Jehovah supporteth him with his hand.

ו

- 26 I had been a youth, I also grew old ;
But I saw not the JUST ONE forsaken ;
23 For those that are blessed of him shall inherit the earth,
And those whom he hath cursed shall be cut off.

vestem, etc." ידע may however signify here to approve, choose, or appoint.

^a Dimock observes that, "as thirty-three MSS. read with the LXX. Vulg. Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and others, כעשן; and, as the third line in ver. 25 is redundant, it might have a place here, reading כל for the first כלל זרעם for זרעו in the last line." Bishop Horsley proposes a different emendation, and renders,

"The enemies of Jehovah, as soon as they are exalted to honour, perish, Vanish, like smoke they vanish."

^a "Borroweth and repayeth not." A proverbial expression. The impious

receive good things at the hand of Providence, to which they have no claims, and are not careful to make a due return of obedience and devotion. They claim much from the mercy of God, without any care to pay the debt of gratitude for that mercy which they hope to find : thus they are borrowers who never pay. Christ is a charitable man, who gives without any prospect of receiving again." HORSLEY, i. 89.

^b I am inclined to think with Bishop Horsley, that the 23d and 24th verses have changed place.

^c "When a man's steps are ordered by Jehovah, then he delighteth in that man's course."

D

- 27 Depart from evil and do good,
And rest always in quiet :
28 For Jehovah loveth judgment,
And will not forsake his beloved.^d

E

- 29 The perverse are destroyed for ever,^e
And the seed of the wicked is cut off :
30 The righteous shall inherit the earth,
And rest quietly thereon for ever.

F

- 31 The mouth of the JUST ONE will utter wisdom,
And his tongue will declare judgment.
32 The law of his God is in his heart,
None of his steps shall falter.

G

- 33 The WICKED ONE watcheth the JUST ONE,
And seeketh to slay him.
Jehovah will not leave him in his hands,
And will not condemn him in his judgment.

H

- 34 Wait on Jehovah and keep his way,
.
And he shall exalt thee to inherit the earth :
When the wicked are cut off thou shalt be seen.

I

- 35 I saw the WICKED ONE in great power,
And spreading himself like a green bay tree :
36 Then I passed by—and lo ! he was not ;
I sought him, but he could not be found.

^d Or, "dearly beloved."^e Following Lowth in adopting thereading of the Alexandrian version,
which reads עוֹלִים and נִשְׁמְדוּ



- 37 Mark the PERFECT and behold the UPRIGHT ONE;
 For the last days of this man 'are' peace :
 38 But the apostates were destroyed together,
 The last days of the wicked were cut off.



- 39 The victory of the righteous 'was' from Jehovah ;
 He was their strength in the time of trouble,
 And Jehovah helped them, he delivered them from the wicked,
 And gave them the victory, because they took shelter in him.

EXPOSITION.

On a transient perusal of this Psalm, taken by itself, one should, perhaps, have overlooked the reference it contains, to Him who is the grand subject of these sacred songs, and the true Alpha and Omega of the faith. But the reader will have found sufficient cause, in the examination of the former Psalms, to suspect that the term "righteous one," or "just one," is not to be understood as a general epithet of the people of God ; but of Him who alone, of all the sons of men, in strictness of speech, deserved that epithet, and through whose righteousness we claim the title of righteous. As a great prelate has observed, who in intellectual powers was inferior to no man that ever employed his talents to illustrate the Scriptures : "The Messiah, if not exclusively, is principally the subject of this Psalm. The stanzas ג, ז, ח, ט, י, are hardly applicable to any other. The admonitions of the Psalm seem chiefly addressed to him. Many parts of it, indeed, predict the final prosperity of the church ; but these predictions are, I think, in the shape of promises to the Messiah. The comminatory parts seem to respect the nation of the Jews immediately, and the Anti-christian faction of the latter times ultimately."¹

Messiah is doubtless the subject, and we are to regard him as the speaker in this Psalm.—As the great Prophet of his church he is instructing "his children" in "the fear of

¹ Horsley.

the Lord." His people may often witness the prosperity of wicked men, and may not only grieve at the success of their evil schemes; but may be tempted to envy them, and think hard thoughts of God. They are, however, to recollect the shortness and perishing nature of that prosperity which distresses them. The enemies of the church, those whom he hath called not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles—for it is the church as a body that is principally addressed, are only suffered to enjoy their partial success for a season, and are then to be cut off by a singular judgment of Almighty Justice.

The church is to rely upon and yield herself up to Jehovah, and to continue the practice of godly virtues. Her Redeemer has not prayed that she should be taken out of the world, but he has given her His peace. She is to dwell on earth, and feed in confidence: the Lord will nourish her, "her bread shall be given her, her water shall be sure." She is to delight herself, or make up her happiness in her God, and all the desires of her soul shall be gratified.—Vers. 3d and 4th.

Her way may be dark and perplexed, but she is to leave all to the Lord, and confidently rely upon his all-ruling providence, that shall make all things work together for good, to them that love him. His righteous vindication of his church in all the blessings that he has purchased for her, and pledged to her, will soon appear as the rising light of the morning; and the final award which her Judge and Redeemer will pronounce in her favour, will be manifest as the brightness of noon.—Vers. 5th and 6th.

The church is quietly to trust her all to the management of Jehovah: she is to wait for his appearing; and not be moved at the transient permitted prosperity of her wicked adversaries and supplanters.—Ver. 7th.

She is to remember, especially, that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Whatever grief and rising indignation, at the success of the wicked, the godly feel, they must take care to repress within due bounds those passions, lest they disturb their peace of mind, and injure their spirit. Whatever unhappy scenes they witness,

whatever wrongs and injuries, the church shall obtain the victory at the last, and the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and reign with Christ upon earth. For him, therefore, let them wait. And this is applicable to the whole family in heaven and in earth; for the souls of the just in paradise, are waiting for this grand event, as well as the weary pilgrims upon earth.—Vers. 8th and 9th.

“The wicked one,” in the 10th verse, concerning whom the church is comforted, is, no doubt, that great prophetic character who was “to make war against the saints of the Most High, and wear them out,” and who for a destined period of 1260 years “should accomplish to scatter” their power, and withstand the rising of Christ’s kingdom. But a little while, and he is no more: and the seat of his former dominion remains in circumstances of dreadful desolation which render it a monument of divine justice. This awful doom of Antichrist, the reader will find distinctly marked in many of the prophecies concerning the fall of the mystic Babylon.

Next follows the promised kingdom: “The meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”

Before this happy period arrives, Christ and his people would long be exposed to the subtlety and malice of the wicked one: often would persecution be stirred up against the church. But however men on earth might be imposed upon by the apparent success of the Antichristian interest, that success would be an object of derision in heaven; and at length a just retaliation would be witnessed in its final overthrow: this is the subject of the 12th and three following verses.

In the 16th verse, it is anticipated that the flock of Christ will appear as few, in comparison of the numerous votaries of the apostacy, who in the language of a subsequent prophecy were to “wonder after the beast.” But these few are counted precious in their great Shepherd’s view, and by the help of Jehovah they are to triumph at the last.

In the 18th verse we are told, that God has prepared for them an everlasting kingdom, and until the destined

period arrive, during the long period of the church's adversity and famine of the word of God through the suppression or corruption of its public ordinances, the Lord will comfort and nourish her.

Next follows another description of the entire destruction of the enemies of Jehovah. 19th—21st.

In the 22d and following verses we have a remarkable contrast between the true Saviour and his rivals. He is the good shepherd that careth for the sheep, and bountifully provideth them with every good: "he layeth down his life for the sheep." But "the hireling" and "the thief" come not but "to rob, and steal, and destroy." This may be illustrated both from the characters and motives of false Christs and false prophets on the one hand, who have by feigned words made merchandise of the deluded people; and by the disinterestedness, the tenderness, and benevolence of the Saviour on the other hand; and also from the hard and cruel terms of acceptance with the Deity, that almost all of these impostors have substituted in exchange for the gracious gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the two following stanzas we have a picture of the continual support of the meritorious Saviour, with whom God is well pleased. Christ, speaking in allusion to the church his mystical body, had passed through the stages of helpless infancy in her first establishment, and he had reached, in the decay of her institutions, the decrepitude of old age;^{*} yet her just Advocate was not forsaken, and at length he sees the fruits of the travail of his soul. He sees his people in possession of the earth, and all the wicked driven from it.

From the 27th verse, Christ admonishes his people, how they may enjoy the privileges of their happy state, through faith in him, under the keeping of the Almighty, till the season so often spoken of shall arrive.

We have again, from the 31st verse, the character of the righteous servant of Jehovah, the great champion of our cause, and the example for our very humble imitation.

^{*} Compare Psalms lxxi. xcii.

The plots and malicious attempts of his adversaries are again noticed in the 33d verse. But the victory is his, at the tribunal of the Most High, before which he stands in his people's cause; and those that wait on him, as it follows in the 34th verse, shall reap the fruits of his victory.

The partial success and prosperity of the wicked one, with his entire destruction; and the triumphs of the righteous that follow, in the latter days, form the subject of the remainder of the Psalm.

PSALM XXXVIII.^b

- 1 O **יְהוָה**, rebuke me not in thy wrath,
Nor chasten me in thine anger :
- 2 Surely thine arrows have descended upon me,
And the stroke of thine hand hath come down upon me.
- 3 There is no wholeness in my flesh,
Because of thine anger ;
There is no soundness in my bones,
Because of my sin.ⁱ
- 4 For my iniquities have passed over my head as a burden,
They are much too heavy for me :^k
- 5 My stripes^l are putrid, they are corrupt,
Because of my folly.^m
- 6 I am bent,ⁿ I am bowed down greatly all the day long ;
I walk as a mourner :
- 7 For my loins are full of inflaming sores,^o
There is no whole place in my flesh ;

^b **לְהוֹדִיָּה** in the title of the Psalm, is by some understood in the sense of affording a memorial—by others it is considered as referring to the music.

ⁱ Or, "the blame I bear."

^k I consider **כְּבֹד** as the infinitive, in the usual idiom.

^l The proper meaning of **חֶבֶר** is

not a wound, but a bruise or wale made by a severe blow (*vibex*). My wales through my severe chastisement are become putrid and running sores.

^m Or, "imputed irreligion."

ⁿ "Distorted" — "writhed with pain." Horsley.

^o From **קָלַח** *ussit*, "ut Arab. **قلي**

- 8 I am become faint, and am greatly worn down,
I have roared with the groanings of my heart.^p
- 9 Lord, before thee is all my desire and my sighing;
It is not hidden from thee.
- 10 My heart flutters—my strength hath failed, even the light of
mine eyes;
Ay, they no longer remain to me.
- 11 My friends and my companions stand aloof at my calamity,
And my kinsmen stand afar off;
- 12 And they who seek my life and wish me ill are laying snares,
They tell of their deep thought and subtlety,
All day long they deliberate.
- 13 And I, as one deaf, hear not; I am as one that is dumb,
Who openeth not his mouth:
- 14 Ay, I was as a man that could not hear,
In whose mouth were no replies.^q
- 15 But to thee, O Jehovah, I looked;
Thou wilt answer, O Lord my Elohim: ^r
- 16 For I said, Lest they rejoice over me:
Boast over me when my foot hath slipped.
- 17 For I am ready to halt,^s
And my torment is ever before me: ^t
- 18 For I set before 'me' my iniquity,
And am alarmed for my sin:

hinc ussit loris, virgis, cutem verberibus dilaceravit, Deut. xxv. 3; adeoque stigmata inussit." SIMON.

^p Or, "agitation."

^q "I am enfeebled and worn down to the extreme, I howl for the anguish of my heart."

BISHOP HORSLEY.

^r "No altercations." Idem.

^s Secker and Horsley are of opinion that the suppliant is in this verse assigning a reason for his silence: we

may, however, regard him as turning from the consideration of his enemies to his appeal to God.

^t Geddes translates and points the two lines in this manner. Bishop Horsley renders, "Truly I am ready to make a false step."

^u "That is, I set in my own view the weight of guilt imputed to me, of which I am to hear the punishment." HORSLEY.

- 19 And my causeless^u enemies are strong ;
 They are multiplied that wrongly hate me :
- 20 Ay, they reward me evil for good ;
 They hate me for the good that I sought.
- 21 Forsake me not, Jehovah ;
 My Elohim, be not far from me ;
 Hasten to my help, O Lord my salvation.

^u Reading עָנָו. See Lowth.

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley, although in his posthumous work the title of the Psalm remains—"The Believer's Soul, under the Image of a Leper, bewails her Corruption and the Misery of her present Condition;" had evidently, subsequent to his writing the above, altered his views on the subject. For he observes, page 95, "Many parts of the Psalm, however, have so striking a reference to our Lord in the days of his flesh, that I cannot but think the whole relates to him, and that he (the humanity of Christ) is the sick persecuted suppliant." These last thoughts of the learned Bishop, I think we may safely adopt, though I differ from him in supposing one labouring under the leprosy or some sickness to be the ideal subject. The language of the Psalm, taken literally, rather presents to our view one that had been severely and cruelly chastised with the lash, and was ready to perish from the effects of his punishment.

In the opening of the Psalm, the poor suppliant, bearing the displeasure of divine justice for the sins of his people, which were exacted of him, and for which he was made answerable, cries for pity and compassion, describing his afflicted state. He was the mark at which vengeance had aimed its shafts; and the hand of the Almighty had heavily chastised him. He represents himself as one that had been so severely punished, that his body was one continued sore and contusion, "because of his sin." "His sin," as the able prelate above quoted observes, "because he had made himself answerable."

In the 4th verse he speaks of these iniquities, which he assumes as his own, under the figure of a man who takes up a burden, and passes it over his head in order to carry it: "Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:"—"He bare our sins in his own body upon the tree." He complains of the weight of his burden, under which his human nature seemed ready to sink: and how well is this illustrated by the description which the Evangelists have left us of the Saviour's passion in the garden of Gethsemane!

In the 5th and three following verses we have a most afflictive picture of one who had been so repeatedly exposed to severe punishments, that his bodily frame was nearly destroyed. This literally applied to our divine Master, when, in consequence of the severe whipping and the other ill-treatment he had endured, he was unable to bear the beam of his cross to the place of execution. At that moment, we might well apply the description of the Prophet: "As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form than the sons of men." But we are, perhaps, to extend the meaning of the passage before us, as figurative of all the internal sufferings of his soul, for there the heaviest stripes of divine justice were felt. The meek Sufferer acknowledges the justness of his punishment: "because of my folly;" or "irreligious ignorance," or "sinful stupidity," as the word properly denotes. For the "sinful stupidity" of all the sons he brings to glory, was charged upon him. "The chastisement of our peace was laid upon him, and by his stripes we are healed."

The 9th and 10th verses so exactly agree with the passion in the garden, that we need but again refer to that scene, to which our attention has so often been called in the exposition of the Psalms. Not that I suppose, on that occasion alone, the mind of the holy Jesus tasted of this cup of bitterness, though this was a remarkable crisis, on account of the near approach of the fatal day; but through all his life, had the man of sorrows borne the heavy burden: "I am bowed down greatly all the day long."

The 11th verse is illustrated by the narrative of the Evangelist: "Then all forsook him and fled, as it is written,

I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered." The 12th verse places exactly before our view, the consultation and deep-laid plans of the Jews, to take away the life of the Messiah.

The 13th and 14th verses are also explained by a particular circumstance in the narrative of Christ's sufferings. "Our Lord," as Bishop Horsley observes, "made no defence when he was accused before Pilate—no apology—no answer to the false witnesses." And as St. Peter remarks, when he points to the holy Victim as an example of the patient endurance of grief, by one who suffers wrongfully: "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously."

This "committing of himself to God" is described in the two following verses of the Psalm before us.

He next prays in sad apprehension of the stroke about to be inflicted. I shall quote the note of Bishop Horsley on the first part of the 17th verse, which he renders, "Truly, I am ready to make a false step." "This is part of what he said, that is, of his reason with himself for making no reply, and taking no measures of his own against his enemies. The humanity of Christ utters this; 'when his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death;' when he prayed 'that the cup might pass from him,' Matt. xxvi. 38—42. Mark, xiv. 33—36; when his agony was so intense, that 'an angel appeared to him strengthening him.' Luke, xxii. 40—46. At this season, he says, 'I am ready to make a false step,' under an apprehension, as it should seem, that his fortitude might fail. His repeated and anxious exhortation to the Apostles, at that particular time, to 'watch and pray, lest they should enter into temptation,' may seem to indicate that he felt the power of temptation strongly at that time in himself. And the temptation of that season was presented to his fears."*

The cause of all this is remarkably set forth in the 18th verse, which the author just quoted well explains: "I set

* Page 98.

in my view the weight of guilt imputed to me, of which I am to bear the punishment. For this cause he was silent, and was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

The 19th and 20th verses designate, I think, particularly his mortal enemies, in distinction from those spiritual foes whose conflicts he most feared. The Psalm ends with the usual prayer of the holy Sufferer, for the deliverance and victory for which he hoped.

PSALM XXXIX.^y

1 I SAID, I will take heed to my way,
That I sin not with my tongue :

I will keep a bridle^z on my mouth
While the WICKED ONE is before me.

2 I was constrained 'in' silence,
I refrained from what was good ;^a

But my grief was stirred,^b

3 My heart within me was hot :

In my agitated mind a fire kindled,^c
I spake with my tongue.

4 "Jehovah, make me to know my end,
And what is the measure of my days ;
I would know how transient I am."^d

^y The term לִירֵחוֹן in the title, has given occasion to several conjectures; some refer it to the music, others suppose it to be the name of a musician.

^z Or "muzzle."

^a Or, "without benefit." החשה מטרוב "Expers felicitatis conticuit." SIMON.—"Abstinuit a rebus letis." GROTIUS and KENNICOTT. נאלמתי דומיה may be literally, "I was tied in silence," i.e. my mouth was tied up; but some think the word אלהם may have the sense of sorrowing, "I mourned in silence."

^b Or, "my grief was excited." Horsley has, "rankled."

^c "Amid the labouring, boiling, or raging commotion of my thoughts."

(Coll. Arab. هجى et هجى aestu-

avit, cum aestu eiecitavit).

^d Or, "that I may know what time I have here." Horsley translates הדל "brief:" "how brief I am," which certainly gives the sense. "I know how soon my strength will be exhausted, and I shall faint and die." "I feel myself to be a dying man."

5 Lo! thou hast made my days 'to be' a span,
And my time is as nothing before thee!

6 Surely every man standeth up as a vapour;^e
Surely a mortal passeth alone as a shadow:^f

Surely 'as' a vapour this noisy multitude is collected,
And they know not who gathereth them.^g

7 And now, Lord, what have I waited for?
My expectation is on thee.

8 Deliver me from all my transgressions,
Let me not be made the reproach of the foolish one.

9 I was silent, nor will I open my mouth,
Because thou hast done it.

10 Remove from me thy stroke;
I have been brought to nought by the blows of thy hand.

11 With chastisements for iniquity thou hast corrected a mortal,
Thou hast consumed his beauty as a moth-worm:
Surely the whole of man is a vapour!

SELAH.

12 Hear my supplication, Jehovah; attend to my cry;
Keep not silence at my tears:

For I am a stranger with thee,
A sojourner as all my fathers.^h

13 O spare me, that I may refresh me
Before I depart and be no more.

^e הַבֵּל "Secundum quosdam vapor ille, aque non absimilis, super arena deserti apparet, quo peregrinatores, aquam sitientes, sæpe cum vitæ suæ periculo falluntur." SIMON. "The Mirage."

^f Or, "In a shadow צֶלֶם." A mere image, a phantasm, a vain show, or appearance seeming to be something

real and substantial.

^g Or, "Gathers them up;" that is, remove the vapoury delusion. I adopt in this place the reading of the Syriac, which has הַמֵּיוֹן instead of הַמֵּיוֹן. The whole passage must be acknowledged difficult, and somewhat uncertain.

^h Lev. xxv. 23.

EXPOSITION.

Some difficulty certainly occurs in the interpretation of this Psalm: but, on the whole, I have no doubt that it is to be applied to the same subject as the former—the passion of our divine Redcemer.

In the 13th and 14th verses of the last Psalm we were presented with the view of the devoted Victim, deserted of all, and standing in silence before his judges and accusers—a silence which both the high priest and the Roman governor thought to be extraordinary—that one so vehemently accused before them should offer no reply, no exculpation, nor solicit any favour of his judges. Was it guilt? was it a stern denial of their authority? No: he acknowledged the hand of God in his ministers of justice, and meant meekly to submit to the sentence about to be pronounced upon him.

But we seem to discover that the holy indignation which he felt at the wicked perversion of justice and judgment was hard to bear: he feared he should say something unbecoming his situation. As St. Paul, we shall recollect, once did, on a similar occasion, for which he afterwards acknowledged his error.¹ And all must be sensible how difficult is the task, “suffering wrongfully,” to “take it patiently;” especially when we view the wicked prostitution of the sacred ordinances of God: yet this, St. Peter tells us, is the spirit of Christ’s example, which all his people should follow before the unrighteous judges.

The 1st verse declares our Lord’s resolution to suppress every dangerous feeling of the injured man, and to submit himself, without a word, without a murmur, to that sentence which these “ministers of wrath” should pronounce upon him. “The wicked one” is certainly emphatic in this place, and the Scripture has so particularly applied it to the civil and ecclesiastical authority, perverted by the devil to oppose and destroy the rising cause of Christ’s kingdom, that I make no doubt the wicked one here, is the high priest and rulers of the Jews and the Roman governor acting at their instigation—but too plain a symbol of the wicked

¹ Acts xxiii. 4, &c.

one with the false prophet that was to appear in the Christian church itself, and still suborn the same civil authorities to persecute the members of Christ when he himself should be "caught up to God and his throne."

This was "that Wicked" before whom the Saviour resolved to be silent: he would "not offend" nor resist "the powers that were of God"—he would "be subject for conscience sake;" and respect the authority of the sovereign power, however perverted and abused. He intended to suffer himself to be "brought as a lamb to the slaughter," and to be "dumb" as a "sheep before her shearers." Accordingly we find, on the three several occasions of his being presented before the spiritual and civil authorities, our Lord observed this peculiar conduct: first, before the high priest and senate of the children of Israel—"the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it that these witness against thee? But he held his peace, and answered nothing." So again, when brought before the governor: "When he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate to him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? But he answered him never a word, insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly." Also when remitted to Herod, the same inexplicable silence was observed; "And he questioned him in many words, but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him." We find, lastly, that in the latter part of his examination, after the devoted Victim had suffered the torture of the cruel scourge, which was probably meant to make him confess, still his persevering silence astonished Pilate: "He went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then said Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" From these extracts it appears how our blessed Lord had laid himself under the restraint of observing a profound silence before his judges.

In the Psalm before us we meet with expressions, in themselves very difficult to be understood, and which, per-

haps, like some other prophecies of Scripture, could only be explained by their fulfilment. "I refrained from" what was "good." This expression may denote that the silent Sufferer did not say what he might in truth and propriety have said: for instance, he might have rebutted the evidence of the false witnesses: this our Lord did not do. But the words are susceptible of another sense. The afflicted and injured Sufferer had resolved meekly to submit to authority, and not utter a complaint: but neither did this meek and submissive conduct satisfy his enemies—it availed him not. "I refrained without good," or "without benefit:" or, I did not succeed in my attempt to observe complete silence—"my grief was stirred," &c.: or, as the meaning may be represented more at large, My mind, sore and ulcerated by misery and insult, was roused and touched to the quick, so that "I could no longer refrain." This is remarkably illustrated by the event. Notwithstanding his general and extraordinary silence, there were occasions, during our Lord's examination, when he seemed provoked to speak. I refer not so much to his answers at length to Pilate, or, when the high priest adjured him by the living God to speak, though all this, perhaps, was in the view of the prophecy; but more especially when, as is recorded by St. John (xviii. 20, &c.) he felt indignant at the impertinent interrogatories of the high priest, "Why askest thou me? ask them who heard me, what I have said unto them; behold, they know what I said."—"And when he had thus spoken," the Evangelist informs us, "one of the officers who stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?" When Jesus again replied, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?"

The event has, I think, explained this difficult passage: the Sufferer resolved, and in general persisted in his resolution of keeping his mouth as it were with a bridle, while the wicked one was before him; but still there was a moment when just indignation moved him to break his silence.

The meaning of the 4th and 5th verses is also attended with some uncertainty. They may be understood as a prayer

—"Lord, strongly impress upon my mind how short my mortal career is to be—how soon the tumultuous scene will be at an end, that I may take courage and support it with patience:" or we may understand the passage, "Jehovah has made me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days: I perceive how short my time is." The holy Sufferer sees his end fast approaching, he perceives himself to be a dying man; and, reflecting how short his allotted time has been, since he is "cut off in the midst of his days," it leads him to reflect upon the vanity and frail condition of human nature, of which he was now made partaker. He compares man, if we understand the passage rightly, to the watery delusion of the desert, a vapour that in that climate puts on a deceitful appearance of lakes or rivers, but the thirsty traveller approaches, and finds it unreal—a mere vapour.

As this vapour stands up, so doth "every man stand up," or "appear erected."—"Like a shadow, a poor mortal passeth along." The Redeemer means himself as to his human nature, and all the race of men, in comparison of the eternal Godhead, and the decrees of the everlasting covenant. The expression כל אדם in ver. 11th, is perhaps something particular: it is literally "the whole of man," and may mean, not only the whole of mankind, but the whole of the human nature—the humanity altogether, which the Son of God had assumed: he finds it so weak, so feeble under the heavy affliction that presses upon him.

The learned reader will know the difficulty attending every interpretation of the latter part of the 6th verse. Our translators suppose a reference to the disturbing bustle of life, and the accumulation of riches, in the uncertainty of knowing who shall enjoy them. This I think very improbable, and prefer, upon the whole, a translation which may be made by the help of the Syriac, which represents the tumultuous crowds that assemble together against Jehovah and against his Christ, to be nothing more than a mere vapour collected in the night, which the rising sun will dissipate. The last clause may be understood of the gathering up of the vapour; that is, its dispersion: or we may understand it, they know not whose instruments they are—they know

not that the evil spirit has collected them together to fight against God: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

The holy Sufferer, in the 7th verse, states the ground of his hope, when his humanity seemed to fail: he fixes all his expectation on God: to him he prays for deliverance from the awful consequence of those transgressions of his people, for which he was now made answerable, and, in his humiliation and sufferings on account of them, was now become a reproach to the foolish. "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;" i. e. on account of his own sins. The hand of God indeed was in it; "but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities."

It was because he was answerable for these, that, as is represented in the 9th verse, "he was silent, and opened not his mouth:" as he observed to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power over me, except it were given thee from above." He therefore sees, in his punishment, only the hand of the righteous Judge—to him he prays, in the 10th verse, to remit the blows under which his mortal frame is exhausted.

It is, I think, of his own person, exhausted by suffering, that the Redeemer speaks in the 11th verse.

And to the same, in the same circumstances, I refer the prayer of the verse following: like all the fathers of his human nature, he was a stranger and sojourner upon earth; he knows what he had to suffer in his dreadful undertaking for man; but, moved by the intensity of his misery, he asks for a little respite before his departure: and "when in the days of his flesh" Christ poured out strong cries and entreaties to Him that was "able to save him from death," we know that, as to some things, "he was heard in that he feared;" and especially the answer to the cry for a little respite in the extremities of his grief, seems illustrated from what we read in the Evangelist Luke, when describing his passion and bitter agony in the garden of Gethsemane, "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him."^k

^k Chap. xxii. 43.

PSALM XL.

- 1 I LOOKED earnestly¹ unto Jehovah, and he inclined unto me,
And heard my calling :
- 2 And he raised me out of the roaring pit^m—
Out of the overwhelming mire.
And he set my feet upon a rock,
Establishing my steps.ⁿ
- 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth,
Praise to our Elohim.
- Multitudes shall see and fear,
And shall trust in Jehovah.
- 4 Blessed is the man that hath placed
In Jehovah his trust ;
And hath not turned unto the proud,
Nor the circulators of falsehood.^o
- 5 Great are the works that thou hast wrought,
Jehovah my Elohim.
Of thy wonders, and of thy designs towards us,
There is no estimate.
Should I declare them and mention them before thee,
They are above number.
- 6 Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not :
Ears hast thou formed me.^p
Burnt offering and sin offering thou didst not require ;
- 7 Then said I, Lo, I come !

¹ "With steady hope I waited."
HORSLEY.

^m "Void pit." Idem. "E vasta voragine." LOWTH.

ⁿ "He gave me firm footing."
HORSLEY.

^o "And turneth him not to pride and the wanderings of falsehood."
LXX. Vulg. Syr.

^p כָּרַח אָזְנוֹיִם "aures effodit.
h. e. auditus sensum dedit, velut
נָתַן אָזְנוֹיִם SIM. Lex. We may compare also אֶזְנוֹיִם Psalm xciv.

and Isaiah l. 5. It seems probable that the Septuagint "σῶμα δὲ κατηπόρωσέν μοι," which is quoted by St. Paul in Heb. x. "A body hast thou prepared me," was rather intended as an equivalent to the Hebrew phrase, than as a literal translation. To put in the capacity of being a hearer, or of hearing as a disciple, as one of the sons of men, when spoken of the Eternal Word, is tantamount to preparing him a human body.

In the volume of the book it is written of me,^a
That I should do thy good pleasure, my Elohim.

8 It has been my delight, thy law was in the midst of my heart.^r
I have spread the tidings of thy righteousness.

9 In the great congregation, lo! I refrain not my lips,
Jehovah, thou hast approved.

10 I have not concealed thy righteousness in my heart,
Thy faithfulness and thy salvation.
I have told—I have not concealed thy tender love and thy truth,
To the great congregation.

11 'I said,' O Jehovah, withhold not thy compassion from me,
Thy tender love and thy truth:

12 Let them continually preserve me, for ills have beset me
That are without number.

My iniquities have seized upon me, that I cannot look up,
They were more than the hairs of my head,
And my heart hath failed me.

13 'I said,' "Be pleased, O Jehovah, to deliver me:
O Jehovah, haste thee to help me.

14 Let them be ashamed and confounded that pursue me,
To destroy my soul;
Let them be driven backward and brought to confusion,
That desire my hurt.

15 Let them be desolate, and have shame for their recompense,
Who say to me, Aha! aha!

16 Let them rejoice and be glad in thee,
All who seek thee;
'Magnified is Jehovah,' let them say continually
Who love thy salvation.

17 And as for me, depressed and helpless,
May the Lord think upon me.
Thou art my helper and deliverer;
My Elohim, do not tarry."

^a Perhaps, "On the unrolling of the Book." "At the head," or "where it is first uncovered," "It is written of me," &c. Augustin refers this to

the opening of the Book of Psalms—
"Blessed is the man," &c.
"Written upon every bowel."

EXPOSITION.

No doubt whatever can exist respecting the subject of this divine poem, since the Apostle to the Hebrews has quoted it in reference to Christ. Bishop Horsley states the subject to be, "Messiah, risen from the dead, returns thanks for the accomplishment of his work, and prays for its final effect."

In application to the "bringing again from the dead the great Shepherd through the blood of the everlasting covenant," the first two verses will be easily understood. The roaring pit, and overwhelming mire, into which the fallen man is sinking, is an apt representation of the soul of the Redeemer, sinking in death and descending into the abyss of hell. But when his work was finished, he found a firm footing in the trackless paths of the deep; and the bands of death being loosed, he hastens to prepare the triumphs of his people.

He is represented, as usual, leading the work of praise. The new song for redemption accomplished, is put into his mouth. He anticipates the successful issue of his cause, now that God hath raised him from the dead: a blessing waits his believing people, who escape the delusions of the corrupters of his holy religion. For, by the proud circulators of falsehood of the 4th verse, are evidently intended the Antichrists of the latter times, so perpetually foretold in Scripture.

The song of the Redeemer next celebrates the wonders of redemption, beyond all estimation great, surpassing all understanding, all enumeration!

We then come to that part of the Psalm which the Apostle has quoted in the tenth chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews; and here we meet with a strong confirmation of the justness of the principles upon which we are now interpreting these sacred songs.

Considered in itself, there is nothing in this Psalm that refers the subject to the Messiah more than the former Psalms, as some might suppose; or rather, far less than

many of them from its own internal evidence. But let us notice how the inspired Apostle introduces this quotation: "*Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Then said I, Lo, I come! In the volume of the book it is written of me, to do,*" or "*that I should do, thy will, O God.*"

We are taught, then, that the speaker in this Psalm is not David, teaching, as some would imagine, the superior excellency of moral above ceremonial obedience; but that the speaker is our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is plain, indeed, the language of the Psalm has not respect to the times of David; for then it would not have been true, that God required not the offerings of the ceremonial law, nor had pleasure in them when properly offered. But in the new dispensation, as administered by the Priest of the better covenant, these services were no longer required. What they shadowed had been realized in the death and sacrifice of Christ, and in that perfect obedience which he had wrought. By these he was now carrying into effect all the divine pleasure concerning his chosen people.

The Apostle, accordingly, reasons upon this passage: "Above, when he said, *Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt offerings, and offering for sins, thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein*; which are offered by the law: then, he said, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!* He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second: by the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this Man, after that he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sate down at the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting, till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified." All that was written in the volume of the book, had Christ fulfilled: and was become "the end of the law to every one that believeth."

I have pointed out in the notes, the best solution of the difficulty in reconciling the Septuagint, which St. Paul

quotes, with the present text ; and conceive the expression in the text, "Ears hast thou formed for me," to be a proverbial expression—"Thou hast put me in the condition of one that hears commands in order to obey them:" this, as spoken of the Word of God, was equivalent to his having a human body prepared for him, in which he took upon him the "form of a servant."^s

Thus guided by the Apostle to refer this language to Christ in the days of his flesh, we are led to interpret the latter part of the 8th and the two following verses, of the preaching of the Gospel, both here on earth for the calling of his people, and also, as I think (compare Psalm xxii.), for the announcing of the glad tidings of finished salvation, in the great congregation of the world of departed spirits.

In the 11th and 12th verses the Saviour, now triumphant, narrates the deliverance he had received, and the tender pity of God, that was ever with him in the lowest scenes of his humiliation. When innumerable troubles beset him—when iniquities, the imputed sins of his people, incalculable in their dreadful amount, were placed as a heavy burden upon him ; when the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, and it was exacted, and he was made answerable ; then it was that "his heart failed him:" or, as I rather think, these two verses with the remainder of the Psalm, rehearses the Redeemer's prayer which he had offered to his heavenly Father in the midst of his strange sufferings.

^s Compare Isaiah l. 4, &c.

PSALM XLI.

- 1 BLESSED is he who rightly considereth the afflicted :^t
In the evil day Jehovah will deliver him.
- 2 Jehovah will preserve and quicken him, and he shall prosper on
the earth ;
Ay, thou wilt not deliver him up to the desire of his enemies.
- 3 Jehovah will support him upon the couch of langour ;^u
Thou wilt change^x all his bed in his suffering.
- 4 As for me, I have said, Jehovah, be gracious to me :
Heal me, for I am guilty before THEE.^y
- 5 My enemies would speak evil against me,
“ When shall he die, and his name perish ?”
- 6 And if he came to see, his heart would utter vanity,
He would surmise evil, go, and proclaim it.
- 7 All that hate me would whisper together against me ;
To myself they impute my calamity :— 1
- 8 “ Some hellish crime^a cleaveth unto him ;
And now he is down, he shall rise no more.”
- 9 Also, my friend, he in whom I confided ;
While he ate of my bread hath lifted the heel against me.^b
- 10 But thou, O Jehovah, be gracious unto me ;
And raise me up, that I may requite them.

^t “The reduced or exhausted ‘one.’”

^u “ ‘The couch of langour: the LXX. have ὀδυνῆς αὐτοῦ,’ HORSLEY.

^x Or “turn.”

^y Bishop Horsley has this important note on this passage: “In this Psalm the Messiah is the speaker, who in his own person was sinless: but the words may be rendered, ‘Surely, I bare blame before thee.’—*Personam peccatoris apud te gero.*” So the word נָשָׂא is used, Gen. xliii. 9. Kennicott renders the sentence as a question:

Have I sinned against thee?’ But I much doubt the use of the particle כִּי as an interrogative.” Augustine takes the same view of the passage.

^z “To myself they impute my calamity;” i.e. they consider my afflicted state as a judgment on me for my crimes.

^a Literally, “an affair of Belial.” “Some cursed thing.” HORSLEY.

^b “גָּדַל” proprie. Coll. Arab. جَدَلَ
Syr. ܓܕܠ et Chald. ܓܕܠ *Torsit, contorsit.*” SIM. LEX.

- 11 By this I know that thou favourest me,
Because mine enemy hath not triumphed over me.
- 12 Thou wilt uphold me in my perfection,
And set me in thy presence for ever.
- 13 Blessed be Jehovah, Elohim of Israel,
From everlasting to everlasting.—Amen and Amen.^c

EXPOSITION.

The quotation of the 9th verse of this Psalm by our Lord, in application to Judas Iscariot, who had been admitted into his confidence, is a key to its interpretation which few commentators have missed; and yet the expression at the opening of the Psalm, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy," has been too generally misunderstood as a blessing on him who is charitable to the poor: but, in truth, the "poor," "afflicted," or "exhausted man," is none other than the same holy Sufferer, whose sorrows and injuries have been all along the subject of these Psalms. The sentiment expressed, as Bishop Horsley notices, is "Blessed is he who shall not be offended in me." Blessed is he who rightly considers the case of this "man of sorrows." You may see him brought low, so that you may despair of salvation by him; but God is still his support, and will exalt him at the last.

The 4th verse is the prayer of the Afflicted, suffering for the imputed guilt of man. The maliciousness of his adversaries is described in the 5th and three following verses: "Many of the Jews," observes Horsley, "who visited our Lord, came to him with insidious designs:" and their glorying over him in the hour of his distress, well illustrates this part of the Psalm. The desertion, too, of a professed friend, who united with his adversaries in bringing our Lord to an ignominious death, is a circumstance in his passion here pointed out: but, as usual, the holy Victim trusts in his God and is delivered—he triumphs over all his foes, and is exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high.

^c Thus endeth the First Book of Psalms, according to the Hebrew division.

THE SECOND BOOK OF PSALMS,

ACCORDING TO THE HEBREW DIVISION.

ספר שני


PREFACE.

According to the division of the Hebrew Psalter, the second book commences with the Psalm before us; and this division of the Hebrew editors appears to be made agreeably with the subjects of the Psalms. In the former book, the personal conflicts and sufferings of our Lord in the days of his flesh, may be called the leading topics of the sacred songs; and his future exaltation and kingdom, when it is mentioned, is mentioned rather as a result and consequence, which is to follow and reward his humiliation and obedience. In the present book, containing the Psalms from the XLIIId to the LXXIIId inclusive, the conflicts of the church in the latter days, and the glorious scenes of the second advent, are more immediately the objects in view: and though the great Advocate on one occasion, Psalm LXIX. glances at the circumstance of his passion, to account for the forlorn condition of the Jews; yet the sacred theme ever transports us to the eve of Messiah's appearing: when the expectation of his kingdom is becoming stronger and stronger in the breasts of his waiting people.

PSALMS XLII.^d AND XLIII.

- 1 As the hart looketh^a for the springs of water,
So my soul looketh for thee, O Elohim.
- 2 My soul is athirst for Elohim, for the living El :
When shall I go and see the face of Elohim ?
- 3 My tears have been my meat day and night,
While 'they' say to me, continually, Where is thy Elohim ?
- 4 This I will remember, and pour out my soul within me,
That I am to pass on to the glorious tabernacle,^f to the house of
Elohim,
With the sound of joy and praise, 'with' a rejoicing multitude.^g
- 5 Why art thou dejected, O my soul ?
And why art thou disquieted within me ?
- 6 Wait patiently for Elohim, for still shall I extol him,
The author of my triumphs and my Elohim.
- My soul is dejected within me, therefore I remember thee.^h
Far from the land of Jordan, and the Hermons, and from the
hill despised.ⁱ
- 7 Deep calleth upon deep at the noise of thy water-spouts,^k
All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me.

^d Lowth, Kennicott, and Horsley are of opinion that this forty-second Psalm, and the following, certainly make one entire piece.

^e Or, "looketh out." "עָרַב *circumspezit* et desiderium sensit alicujus rei. (scilicet  est *ascendit*, in specie *circumspiciendi* causa : adeoque *circumspezit* intentis oculis)." *Sm. Lex. Heb.* Some suppose that the distressing cry of the animal is expressed.

^f Or, "with a multitude of glorified ones."

^g Compare Psalm lxxviii.

^h Horsley explains this line, "I will remember—on account of, &c." i.e. on account of the desolate state of the country : I comfort me in remembering thy promises.

ⁱ "The little hill;" i. e. Zion. The river Jordan and the mountains of Hermon were the most striking features of the Holy Land. Zion was a little hill in comparison of the Hermons, now reduced low in estimation and despised.

^k "Deep calleth upon deep," rather, wave upon wave. *Comp. Exod. xv. 5 and 8.*

- 8 In the day 'I say,' May Jehovah display his tenderness,
And at night my song 'is' supplication to the El of my life :¹
- 9 Saying unto El, "My rock, why hast thou forsaken me ?
Why go I mourning while the enemy oppresseth ?"
- 10 The reproach of mine adversaries is as a sword in my bones,
When they say, continually, Where is thy Elohim ?
- 11 Why art thou dejected, O my soul ?
And why art thou disquieted within me ?
- Wait patiently for Elohim, for still shall I extol him,
The author of my triumphs, and my Elohim.

XLIII.

- 1 Give me justice, O Elohim, and sustain my cause,
From a nation not beloved,^m deliver me from the man of deceit
and of wickedness :
- 2 For thou art my strength, O Elohim ; why hast thou rejected
me ?
- Why go I mourning while the enemy oppresseth ?
- 3 Send forth thy light and thy truth, let them lead me,
Let them bring me to thy holy hill and to thy dwelling ;
- 4 That I may go unto the altar of Elohim,
Unto El, the theme of my rejoicing,
And may extol on the harp Elohim, my Elohim.

Why art thou dejected, O my soul,
And why art thou disquieted within me ?

Wait patiently for Elohim, for yet shall I extol him,
The author of my triumphs, and my Elohim.

¹ "The preserver of my person." Idem. Or, "who are not the objects
HORSLEY. of thy loving kindness."

^m "From a nation of no pity."

EXPOSITION.

The first of these Psalms opens with a beautiful allusion to a deer in the desert, which, overtaken with thirst, mounts some eminence to look out for the wonted signs of water

in the dreary waste. So looketh my soul, says the great Advocate in his mystic character, still touched with the feeling of his people's infirmities, for the appearance of the glory of Jehovah, which he is to manifest at the appointed day. The Israelite about to be restored is especially personated, but the Christian whose heart is directed into the patient waiting for Jesus Christ, and who loves his appearance, will heartily unite in this language: "He will be looking for," as St. Peter expresses it, "and hastening unto the coming of the day of the Lord." In this hope many have fallen asleep in Jesus, not having received the promise, but released from sin and sorrow, are gone to wait in Paradise. The church, as a body, is still looking and eagerly desiring, in the wilderness of this world, "for the times of refreshment from the presence of the Lord," which will alone release her distress and satisfy her pressing wants. It appears too, from parallel prophecies, that the expectation of the appearance of the glorious Redeemer will, in the latter days, become a particular object of derision to an unbelieving world; and that the persecuted church of Christ, as well as the preserved remnant of Israel, will be much taunted with her supposed disappointment. This I imagine to be in the view of the prophetic Spirit, verse 3, "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they say to me continually, Where is thy God?"—"Beloved"—"I now write to you," "that ye may be mindful of the words that were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour: knowing this, first, that there shall come in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." It should seem also, that this "slackness of God concerning his promise, as some men count slackness," has not only the effect of encouraging the boast of the adversary over the afflicted church; but will also embolden some of her rulers to betray their trust and abuse their authority to purposes of oppression and tyranny. Our Lord's caution bids us expect this: "But, and if that

wicked servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the man-servants and maid-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken," &c.

In such a season as this, the faithful few must encourage themselves in the promises of God, with that joy which the Psalmist sets before them in the 4th verse; and with the prospect of which he checks his desponding thoughts in the 5th and 6th verses.

He mentions, indeed, in the latter part of the 6th verse, the Holy Land as a particular object of his solitudes, as though he expected to pass over into that country to the glorious tabernacle, to the house of God. This has led Bishop Horsley to conjecture, that either an individual of the Hebrew race, or a church of the circumcision, to be gathered in the latter days, is the suppliant in this Psalm. I understand the subject rather more generally of "the Israel of God," "the strangers scattered abroad," "the holy people whose power Antichrist has accomplished to scatter," the saints against whom he wages successful war for 1260 years. The natural branches, which have been broken off from this olive-tree, are, we know, to be grafted again on their parent stock; and on the eve of that event subsequent prophecies, I think, mark the distinction between the called church, waiting the coming of her Lord, and to enter into his glory, and the natural Israel preparing for their restoration, and a return to the Holy Land, from the present scenes of their dispersion; a leading event in the last pages of the history of the natural Israel, and therefore may be well supposed to be in the view of the prophecy before us.

It appears, too, that the whole church of God have a common interest in the events of this restoration of the Jews to the land of Canaan; and have a common cause to fix their longing eyes upon this wonderful country, "which is the glory of all lands," and is to be "the joy of the whole earth." We cannot yet, perhaps, trace distinctly the connexion of these predicted events; but we know, in general, that the re-occupation of Palestine by the Jews, is to be hoped for, not for their sakes alone, but as connected with the personal appearance of Christ, and "our gathering to-

gether to him;" and it is not improbable, that the restoration of "Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage with her children," will soon lead to the coming down out of heaven of "the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all;" and it is to the hills of the sanctuary that the trumpet of the archangel will in some sort summon all the elect, or that there at least will be "the manifestation of the sons of God."

The season that immediately precedes this glorious epocha, we know from other Scriptures, is to be "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time."ⁿ To this I suppose we are to refer the 7th verse: "Deep calleth upon deep: at the noise of thy waterspouts, all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me." "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."^o "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other."^p

With these words the waiting people of God will comfort themselves, and be encouraged to offer their supplications to God amidst the taunts and cutting reproaches of their adversaries.

Lastly, the nation not beloved or un pitying, no objects of God's great grace, and the deceitful and the wicked man, the oppressors of the people of God in general, who are in some wonderful course of providence, the great opposers also of the restoration of Israel—these are clearly the last confederacy of the Antichristian powers; and in their overthrow, when engaged on this expedition, appears the manifestation of the promised kingdom. Whatever times, then,

ⁿ Daniel xii. 1.

^o Luke xxi. 24, &c.

^p Matthew xxiv. 31.

we may live to see, and especially if events^a should lead us to fix our eyes on that wonderful country; whatever discouragement may harass and seem to disappoint those who are waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us remember the language of this Psalm:

Why art thou dejected, O my soul?
 And why art thou disquieted within me?
 Wait patiently for God, for yet shall I extol him,
 The author of my triumphs and my God.

^a And surely what was anticipated twenty years ago, recent events have greatly corroborated: and the expectations both of Jews and Gentiles are, at this moment, intensely fixed upon this high-destined country.

PSALM XLIV.*

- 1 O ELOHIM, we have heard with our ears,
 Our fathers have told us what thou hast wrought
 In their days, in the times of old.
- 2 Thou drivest out the heathen with thine hand, and plantedst
 them.
 Thou afflictedst the nations and causedst them to flourish.
- 3 For they got not the land in possession by their sword,
 Neither was it their arm that saved them:
 But it was thy right hand and thine arm,
 And the light of thy countenance; for thou didst favour them.
- 4 ^a Thou the same art my king and my Elohim;^c
 Thou that didst command ^a deliverances for Jacob.
- 5 Through thee we shall push down our enemies,
 Through thy name shall we tread down them that rise up against
 us:

* This Psalm is also superscribed
 "to the Sons of Korah."

^a Gospel Church loquitur.

^c Or, "Thou art the same, my

King 'and' my God:" vide the ancient versions.

^a "Ordained." HORSLEY.

- 6 For I will not trust in my bow,
It is not my sword shall save me :^a
- 7 For it is thou that hast saved us from our enemies,
And hast put to shame them that hated us.
- 8 In Elohim have we continually triumphed ;
Thy name, therefore, we will extol for ever.

SELAH.

- 9 ^r But thou didst cast us off and put us to shame,
And went not forth with our armies.
- 10 Thou madest us to turn back from the enemy,
And they that hate us have plundered us.
- 11 Thou gavest us to be food like sheep,
Thou didst scatter us among the gentiles.
- 12 Thou didst sell thy people for nothing,
And enhanced not their price.^z
- 13 Thou hast made us a reproach to those among whom we dwell ;^a
A scorn and derision to them that are round about us.
- 14 Thou hast made us a proverb among the gentiles,
A shaking of the head among the nations.
- 15 Every day is my shame before me,
And confusion of face hath covered me,
- 16 Because of the cry of him that reproacheth and persecuteth,
Because of the enemy and accuser.^b
- 17 ^c All this hath come upon us, yet we forgot not thee,
Neither have we been false to thy covenant.

^a The Syriac reads in the first person plural.

^y Church of Israel loquitur.

^z Such I conceive to be the meaning of רכית במחיריהם. The idea is that of a trader trying to sell his goods as dear as he can, and with that view, as though he were unwilling to part with them, setting at first

a higher price upon them than he is at length persuaded to take.—Sale of the Jews in Egypt.

^a Or, "those who afford us a dwelling," HORSLEY.

^b Or, "he who would vindicate himself," or "the avenger."

^c Gospel Church loquitur.

- 18 Our heart turned not back,
Nor did our step decline from thy way :
- 19 When thou hadst crushed us in the place of dragons,
And had overwhelmed us with the shadow of death.
- 20 If we have forgotten the name of our Elohim,
Or have lifted up our hands to a strange El,
- 21 Would not Elohim have searched this out ?
For he knoweth the secrets of the heart.
- 22 Surely for thy sake we have been killed all the day long,
We have been accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
- 23 Arise ; why sleepest thou, O Lord ?
Awake, do not fail for ever.^d
- 24 Why hidest thou thy face—
Forgettest our affliction and our oppression ?
- 25 Our soul is bowed down to the dust,
Our body cleaveth to the ground.
- 26 Raise up some help for us :
Aye, rescue us for the sake of thy tender love.*

^d Or, "be not remiss." The term is sometimes applied to the failing of a stream through drought.

* A Father's compassion on his afflicted outcasts.

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley thought that this Psalm was a prayer for the new Hebrew church in the latter times, suffering under Antichrist's persecution ; and it is very clear that some parts of it are spoken in the character of an Israelite, at the same time it is most manifest that St. Paul quotes another part of it as spoken by members of the Gospel church. This has led me to a conclusion, which, to my own mind, is quite satisfactory—that we are to consider this Psalm, like some others, as drawn up in the form of a dialogue. I should not say between the new Hebrew church in the latter days, not being convinced that before the appearing of our Lord in

glory, there will be any body of people answering to that description, but between the remnant of the natural Israel in the last days, under some manifestations, perhaps, of their covenanted God, being prepared for their restoration—between these and what shall remain of the faithful in the Gospel church at the same period. The first three verses I ascribe to Israel about to be restored. They encourage themselves after the wonted manner of these divine songs, by calling to mind the wonders of old times, especially the divine power so miraculously displayed at the time of the Exodus, and of their taking possession of the Land of Canaan; and Israel is warranted by the Scriptures of the prophets to expect a similar, nay a greater manifestation of the same Almighty hand in their restoration to their long lost country.

From the fourth to the eighth verse inclusive, I think the faithful remnant of the Gospel church take up the theme—at the period anticipated, fellow-sufferers with God's ancient people under the triumphant tyranny of the Antichristian powers. Thou the same art, my king O Elohim, &c. intimating that they too in the approaching struggle, rested their hope not on their own prowess, but like them looked to the God of Jacob for help.

In the ninth verse continued to the sixteenth inclusive, the outcast Hebrew is again introduced, and these verses contain a mournful plaint, very similar to many other parts of scripture, complaining how the God of their Fathers had forsaken them, and describing their sufferings and the indignant treatment they had so long endured in their captivity and protracted sojourn among the Gentile nations.

Next in the seventeenth verse and five following, the personification of the faithful in Christ Jesus, in the midst of his apostate churches, from the hand of the same enemy is very striking, "All this has come upon us," as much as to say, we too have suffered while the world rejoiced, and have fallen by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil many days. And the Gospel remnant, kept by the power of God through faith, had suffered these things not for a breach of the covenant of their God—for there seems

a tacit admonition to afflicted Israel here—but we have suffered for our faithfulness to our God and king, because we would not deny the faith once delivered to the saints. “No, not when we were crushed in the place of dragons:” fell among the Antichrists of the last times, while the great Red Dragon ruled through the persecuting powers of Pagan Rome, we were brought before kings and rulers for our Master’s sake and would not deny his name: then after that when the character of the warfare was changed, at the peril of our lives no false prophet could deceive us that we should worship the Beast, or his image, or receive the awful signatures of his apostacy, we dared not, conscious of the presence of a heart-searching God, to worship him who sat, and showed himself, as a God, in the temple of *the everlasting*: nor could we, in a perverted ordinance of our Master’s, be brought to adore a strange god, in the pretended shape of a new Omnipresent, in the form of a transubstantiated wafer.

The suffering church can say on this occasion, that notwithstanding all these afflictions that had come upon her, it was not as a punishment for her breach of covenant, or for forsaking her God; such as had usually been the cause of Israel’s calamities; but she now could say she suffered for conscience sake; “Surely, for thy sake we have been killed all the day long; we have been accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” This verse, it will be recollected, is quoted by the Apostle Paul, and applied to the primitive Christians, under the persecutions they had begun to suffer in his days. And he attests at the same time the faithfulness of the saints, through the strong hold that the love of God, manifested by the Spirit, had upon their hearts: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? as it is written, *For thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.* Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any

other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The prayer of the latter part of the Psalm from the twenty-third verse, will be easily understood. I should be inclined to consider it a chorus in which both parties join.

PSALM XLV.^f

- 1 MY heart hath laboured with a delightful theme,
I address my work to the king;^g
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.^h
- 2 Most beautiful 'beyond the sons of Adam.'
Grace is diffused on thy lips;
ⁱ Therefore Elohim hath blessed thee for ever.^k
- 3 Thy sword gird upon thy thigh, O mighty man!^l
In thy splendour and majesty go forward;
- 4 Ride on in the cause of truth and on behalf of justice.^m

^f This Psalm is called in the Hebrew title "A Song of Loves." Another new term is also found in this superscription *על ששנים* which is generally supposed to relate to the tune or instrument of music to which the Psalm was to be sung.

^g Or, "When I declare the deeds of the king, my tongue is, &c."

^h Such is nearly the translation of Bishop Horsley. I retain the "ready writer" of our public translation in preference to the "well-instructed writer," which the Bishop would substitute, conceiving that the subseriency of the human faculties to the spirit of inspiration, is alluded to under the figure of a pen in the hand of a ready and expert writer.

ⁱ Or "since."

^k "Summopere pulcher effectus es." SIM. Lex. Heb. The prophet seems to be contemplating the splendour and majesty of the glorified man, not now in the flesh, but as he appears in his latter-day glory. "Is poured from." HORSLEY. Rosenmuller observes that it is similar to

what Cicero says of Pericles, "that persuasion dwelt on his lips."

^l "Buckle on thy refulgent dazzling armour." HORSLEY. Who, in his notes, remarks, "After all, I am persuaded that Luther gives the true exposition of this passage; viz. that the nouns *חַיָּיִךְ* and *חַיָּיִךְ* are accusatives under the government of the verb *חָנַךְ* and signify the ornamental robes of majesty which the hero is exhorted to put on." Compare Is. lxiii. 1, &c. Or retaining, as in the received text, the second *הַדֶּרֶךְ* we may perhaps render,

Girded was thy sword upon thy thigh,
Great thy majesty and state;
And thy state advancing* rode.

Compare Milton:

Onward he moved,
And thousands of his saints around.
Far off their coming shone.

^m *עָנָה* "Cum *ה* Parag. idemque significat quod *יָעַן* propter." SIM. Lex. — "Ad responsonem justitiæ." Houbigant. Or, perhaps, "Because of depressed justice;" or, "on the demand of justice."

* "Victoriously."

And let thy right hand show thee dreadful weapons"—

5 Arrows sharpened 'for' the nations :

Let them fall beneath thee into the heart of the king's enemies.

6 Thy throne, O Elohim, is for ever and ever ;

A just sceptre is the sceptre of thy kingdom :

7 Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity ;

Therefore Elohim hath anointed thee ;

Thy Elohim, with gladdening oil, above thy fellows ;^o

8 Thy garments are all myrrh, aloes, and cassia.

They greet thee from the palaces of Armenian ivory,^p

9 King's daughters in thy costly attire :^q

The consort placed at thy right hand in gold of Ophir.^r

10 Hear, O daughter, and consider, incline thine ear,

And forget thy people, and the house of thy father ;

11 So shall the king delight in thy beauty, for he is thy lord.

And bow thyself before him,

12 When the daughter of Tyre with a gift,

'When' the rich among the people entreat thy favour.*

13 Most splendid 'is' the royal daughter within,^t

Her robe is intertisted with gold ;

14 With garments of embroidery is she conducted to the king.

^a That is, Let thine hand take them from the quiver, where they lay concealed. "He hath ordained his arrows for the persecutors." Or, omitting the caph, "let thy right hand dart forth terrors."

^o Or,

"Since, O Elohim, thy Elohim hath anointed thee,
With a delightful oil above thy fellows."

"Those, whom thou art not ashamed to call thy brethren." Perhaps, "kings."

^p "They pleasure thee," or "they cheer thee"—"Armenian ivory," so the Chaldee interpreter renders שן מני—others refer to the minni of Arabia.

^q Bishop Horsley observes, "The primitive notion of יקר is *brightness*; hence יקררן *scintilla*; hence beautiful women: 'Kings' daughters are among thy bright beauties.'" It is not, however, I conceive, so much the

personal beauty of the attendants of the royal bride, as the splendid appearance of their dresses, which is the allusion in this place: it is manifestly so with the queen below; nor is it probable that the persons of the eastern ladies would be exposed to view on such an occasion as is here supposed. It may be doubted, also, whether *brightness*, or *weight*, or *costliness*, be the primitive notion in יקר See SIMON.

^r Or, "in a portable carriage splendidly gilt."

^s I am led to this division by the supposed structure of the verse, and find it to be consonant with that of Bishop Hare, and which has also the approbation of Lowth.

^t "Within," that is, within the awning of her covered vehicle. See the picture of a bridal procession in Mr. Lane's Egypt.

- The virgins, her companions, follow her,
 They approach to thee in long procession ;
 15 With gladness and rejoicing they enter into the king's palace.
 16 In the place of thy fathers shall be thy children,
 Thou shalt appoint them for princes over all the earth.
 17 They shall celebrate thy name throughout all ages,
 So shall the nations praise thee for ever and ever."

"The ancient versions had יִזְכְּרוּן
 "They shall commemorate," Houbigant prefers this reading for rea-

sens," says Bishop Horsley, "which seem to me unanswerable."

EXPOSITION.

The ancient Jews, with great unanimity, apply this Psalm to the king Messiah, and Bishop Horsley has shown at large in his sermons on this sacred song, the unreasonableness and inconsistency of every hypothesis that refers it, even in a typical sense, to Solomon or David. As he justly observes, "this Psalm relates to the second advent: the bridegroom is the conquering, not the suffering Messiah; the marriage is celebrated after his victories." With respect to the bride in this *Epithalamium*, I prefer the first exposition stated by Horsley, that the bride is the CHURCH CATHOLIC, and not, as he rather inclines to think, "the church of the converted Jews, become the metropolitan church of all Christendom:" but by the Catholic church I understand the church triumphant, now appearing in the glory of her Lord.

The marriage, I have no doubt, is the same as that announced in the xixth chapter of Revelation; the conquering bridegroom the same; and the bride "the holy city, the new Jerusalem," which John saw "coming down from God out of heaven, *prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*" Chap. xxi. 2.

The first verse represents to us the agitated state of the Prophet's mind, when the holy afflatus seized upon and held his faculties in possession, causing him "to speak as he was moved by the Holy Ghost." The learned reader will recol-

lect how very similar were the notions which prevailed in the ancient heathen world, respecting the nature of the prophetic inspiration: and in the book of Job, when rightly rendered, we have an exact parallel. *

The beauty of Messiah's person, and 'the grace diffused on or from his lips,' is to be understood rather of moral excellencies: the obedience by which as man he procured the palm of merit, and the eternal blessing from the God of his salvation: or, adopting another construction, it is the beauty and grace of the glorified Messiah, which is the present object of admiration, and then how great the contrast!—Isaiah, liii.

The three next verses are clearly explained and illustrated by Rev. xix. 11, &c. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war: his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself: and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." That this Conqueror is the bridegroom of the church, appears from verse 7: "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

The archer in the Psalm, sending abroad his deadly shafts in the cause of truth and of justice, is exactly parallel to the delineation which follows in the prophetic vision; as is also the address to the divine Person in the character of the righteous king, to the congratulations of the heavenly host: "Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," &c. Ver. 15th: "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of

* Job xxxii. 17, &c.

Almighty God: and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**" Kings and lords, it may be, are the "fellows," above whom the precious ointment has anointed him everlasting king: "I make him my first born, higher than the kings of the earth."

We discover again, in this parallel Scripture, who the nations are, for whom the arrows of the mighty Warrior have been sharpened—these enemies of the King, into whose hearts they pierce: and we find, according to the general burden of prophecy, the arrows are prepared for the persecutors. These nations are those that have been rebels to the Gospel sceptre, that "would not have this man to reign over them"—the nations that had corrupted the holy religion of Jesus Christ, and oppressed his people, against whom they had "made war" and "prevailed" "for a time, and times, and the dividing of times." These are ever the victims marked out in prophecy for the vengeance of the glorified Saviour at his second advent.

"And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse and against his army: and the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: and the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse, which proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

It is after this destruction of the Antichristian powers, at the Redeemer's second coming, that the glorious scenes, symbolized by the marriage supper of the Lamb, take place: and, if I understand it rightly, the monarchy, whose erection is here proclaimed, is the personal reign of Christ for a thousand years previous to the final overthrow of Satan, and henceforward for ever and ever.

The bride I think to be an emblem of no community of saints in "flesh and blood"—"inhabiting houses of clay," however connected with restored Jerusalem upon the earth,

which in some sort she invests with her glories in respect to the world of living men ; but of the church triumphant—all the departed saints, and all the elect of God, gathered from the four quarters of the heaven. “The dead in Christ shall first rise, then they which are alive and remain, shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” These together, being “the children of the resurrection,” form the people of “the New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven :” and they are to reign with Christ for a thousand years, as kings and priests over all the earth, as is noticed in the last verse of the Psalm. This I conceive is the glorious church described in this beautiful poem under the idea of a royal bride, with her splendid attendants, in “all the pomp and circumstance” of an eastern court. What is meant especially by the daughter of Tyre, with her gift, and the rich ones of the people entreating for favour, the event, perhaps, alone can fully show : but we shall recollect several passages of Scripture that hold a similar language—passages, wherein Tyre, the great trading city of the times, seems to be used as a prophetic emblem of some or of all the rich and flourishing nations of the earth, that are not partakers of Babylon’s plagues, and shall survive her fall ; particularly Isaiah, xxiii. 18 : “And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord ; it shall not be treasured or laid up ; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently and for durable clothing.”

This prophecy may, however, be as well intended for the literal Tyre, as for some future daughter of commerce : and we read in the Revelation, chap. xxi. ver. 24, &c. where the holy city, which is but another symbol for the “Lamb’s wife,” is mystically described, “And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it : and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it : and the gates shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there : and they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it.”

PSALM XLVI.^y

- 1 God is our shelter and strength,
In trouble was he found a help indeed :^z
- 2 Therefore we will not fear, when in the changing of the earth^a
And in the moving of the mountains in the midst of the sea,
- 3 Its waters roar and foam,
And the mountains be shaken at its swell.
- SELAH.
- 4 'As for' the flood,^b its streams shall gladden the city of Elohim,
The holy 'place' of the tabernacles of the Most High.
- 5 Elohim is in the midst of her, she cannot be stirred :
Elohim shall help her at early dawn.^c
- 6 The nations raged, the kingdoms were in motion ;^d
He uttered his voice ; the earth melteth away.
- 7 Jehovah Sabaoth is with us,
The Elohim of Jacob is our high refuge.
- Come, behold the works of Jehovah !
- 8 What objects of astonishment^e hath he placed on the earth !
He maketh wars to cease in all the world :
- 9 He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spears asunder,
He burneth the chariots with fire.

^y The best conjecture concerning the term *על מות* seems to be that which refers it to the tune or music. Some, however, with Bishop Horsley, render it "mysteries."—"To the Giver of Victory. For the Sons of Korah. A Song concerning Mysteries."

^z Or, "A help in times of trouble most easily found."

^a Or, "overflowing." *המר שִׁמְרִי*
effudit—fluxit aqua: המר שִׁמְרִי

exundans fluvius cum quo comparatur exercitus. T. 272, 3." Arab. Lex.

^b *נָהָר* I have no doubt is intended, not for a distinct stream, but

for the flood or inundation just described. Zion cannot be shaken—she is not moved, nor undermined by the waters. They are diverted into channels that serve for her accommodation. A beautiful symbol to show how all the troubles of the world shall be over-ruled for the final prosperity of the people of God, if nothing more were meant.

^c "Right early," or rather, with the margin, "when the morning appeareth." PUB. TRANS.

^d "Nations are disquieted, kingdoms are overthrown." French and Skinner.

^e *שִׁמְרִי* "1. *Desolatio*—2. *stupor*. Jer. viii. 21. Metonymice *objectum* sive *materia stuporis*. Deut. xxviii. 37, &c." SIMON. So Horsley.

- 10 Be still, and know that I am Elohim ;
I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.
- 11 Jehovah Sabaoth is with us,
The Elohim of Jacob is our high refuge.

EXPOSITION.

I fully agree with Bishop Horsley, that this Psalm relates to the wars and insurrections in the latter ages, and to the final victory over the apostate faction: he supposes a particular reference to the restoration of the Jews, which he says, "will be one of the first things at the season of the second advent." Perhaps we should state the subject more correctly, by saying, the prophetic Spirit has in view the general business of the second advent; and dimly shows, what subsequent prophecies have more illustrated, how a mighty struggle on the shores of Palestine, in connexion probably with the restoration of Israel, will end the conflict with the powers of the earth, and lead to the establishment of the glorious reign of Christ and his saints. It may be impossible for us at present to distinguish the connexion of these events; viz. the last efforts of the Antichristian powers—the expedition in Palestine—the restoration of the Jews—the coming of Christ—the judgment of his enemies—and the establishment of his glorious kingdom; but that they are connected together, seems clear from the general tenour of prophecy.

The dreadful commotions and conflicts of the raging nations, the Psalm contemplates not merely under the metaphor of the overwhelming floods, but as I am led to think, as actually accompanied with this conflict of elements:—the ocean rising from its channels, overflowing all the country, dissolving the mountains in its bosom, with all the phenomena of the tornado and tremendous earthquake: that this, however, is the last conflict of the nations, is clear from this, that there succeeds immediately the reign of the Prince of Peace, when, to use the language of Isaiah, "men shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks"—"and learn war no more."

We are clearly guided then in referring this Psalm to the same period as the last: the rising ocean—the nations raging—the kingdoms in motion, are nothing else than those mighty preparations of Antichrist disclosed at the pouring out of the sixth vial, taken together with the great earthquake of the seventh vial—events, that, according to our best commentators, the world is every year to look for. “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up; that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet: for they are spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth and the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief; blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he be found naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

The sudden appearance of the Redeemer is here announced; and under the seventh vial, which shows the commotions at their height, the long-expected event happens.

“And the seventh angel poured out his vial in the air; and there was a great voice out of the temple of heaven, saying, It is done.”—“He uttered his voice, and the earth melted away.” Compare Psalm XXIX. and the Scriptures referred to there.

The peculiarity of this conflict, and that by which it is distinguishable from all others, is this, that it is terminated by the visible interference of Him that is called “THE WORD OF GOD.”—“And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth;” viz. the sentence of the eternal Judge. As it immediately follows in the description of the seventh vial: “And there were voices and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.”

Yet, according to Daniel, as well as St. John's prophecy, Messiah is to appear: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

With the deliverance of Israel, we here learn, is closely connected the resurrection of the just,—of some of the unjust too, as it appears from this passage,—and the reign of the saints. Our divine Master has spoken of these commotions, and the sudden appearance of his kingdom, in language, still more resembling the Psalm before us: "And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity: *the sea and the waves roaring*; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."^f

In all her troubles the church of Christ has encouraged herself in the language of this Psalm; but, the season is perhaps not very distant, when she must actually be conversant in the scenes long anticipated, which this prophecy so strikingly describes.

^f Luke xxi. 25, &c.

PSALM XLVII.

- 1 CLAP your hands all ye nations,
Shout to Elohim with the sound of triumph :
- 2 For Jehovah, the Highest, is feared :
He is the great king over all the earth.
- 3 He will subdue the peoples under us,
And the nations under our feet.
- 4 He will choose for us this our inheritance,
The boast^e of Jacob whom he loved.

SELAH.

- 5 Elohim hath ascended with a shout,
Jehovah with the sound of a trumpet.
- 6 Chant ye our Elohim, chant ye,
Chant ye, chant ye our King :
- 7 For he is king 'in' all the earth ;
Chant ye Elohim in songs of triumph.
- 8 Elohim reigneth over the nations,
Elohim sitteth upon the holy throne.
- 9 The princes^h of the peoples are assembled
'With' the people of the Elohim of Abraham.ⁱ
- For the gifts^k of the earth 'are presented' to Elohim,
He is greatly exalted.

^e Or, "this glory."^h "I have sometimes thought that
עַמִּים גְּדִיבֵי עֲמִים might be rendered the
voluntary ones of the people." HORSLEY.ⁱ Or, perhaps, "In the presence of
the God of Abraham."^k מַגְבֵּי signifies, not only *shields*,
but also *gifts* or *presents*. Compareמִגְבֵּי מִגְבֵּי *gratis dedit.* But seeבְּנֵן "The whole verse may
be rendered :

The princes of the peoples are gathered together ;
A people of the God of Abraham ;
For the mighty ones of the earth are [become]
God's ;
He is exceedingly exalted."

HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm has by some been supposed a continuance of
the last: it is evidently, from its subject, a proper sequel to

that sacred song; for it celebrates the glorious victory announced towards its close. Horsley has entitled it, "A Song of Triumph in Prospect of the Establishment of God's universal Kingdom."

In this view we may consider this Psalm as parallel to the song of triumph which St. John heard, at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, in congratulation of the glorious scenes about to be disclosed: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."¹—"Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Israel is put in possession of the land of promise for ever, but we must extend our thoughts beyond the natural Israel, though their restoration is one part of the preparatory dispensation for the manifestation of Christ's kingdom: we must refer to the fulfilment of the promise which was made to Abraham and his seed, that he "should be heir of the world;" that is, lord and possessor of the earth at a future stage of the dispensation of the kingdom: but "this promise is sure to all the seed, not to that which is of the circumcision only, but to that which is of the faith of Abraham."

In view of the kingdom of Christ, therefore, whatever special dispensation of Providence may be exercised in gathering the Jews, whatever be the supremacy given to the restored Jerusalem over the nations on the new earth,—a fact clear from the prophetic scriptures—it is, in a paramount

¹ Rev. xi. 15, &c.

sense, under the feet of this blessed company—of Christ and his saints risen in their glorified bodies, and not under the feet of converted Israel merely, that the nations of the earth are to be subdued. “The new Jerusalem, that cometh down from God out of heaven,” and not “a city of this building,” however locally connected, is to be in fact the metropolis of his dominion and universal monarchy.

PSALM XLVIII.^m

1 JEHOVAH is magnified and greatly extolled

In the city of our Elohim.

2 His holy hill is beautiful in elevation,^a

The joy of all the earth.

The hill of Zion, ‘with’ the northern quarters,

‘Is’ the city of the great King.

3 Elohim ‘is’ in her towers,

He is made known as a defence.

4 For, lo! the kings assembled;

They passed on, they were united.^o

5 Themselves beheld, truly they were astonished,

They were alarmed, they were hurried on,^p

6 A trembling seized upon them there,

A pang as of a woman in travail :

7 As when with an east wind thou dost break

The ships of Tarshish.

8 As we had heard, so did we see.

In the city was Jehovah Sabaoth.

^m שִׁיר מְזוֹר לְבְנֵי קִרְיָה

^a “‘Mount Zion is beautiful in extension;’ i.e. in the prospect it extends to the eye.” BATE in PARKHURST. “נֶרֶךְ *eminētia*, gibbus (ab

נֶרֶךְ נֶרֶךְ נֶרֶךְ *eminuit* נֶרֶךְ *gibbus* v. c. cameli.” SAM. Lex.—“Pul-

cherimus montium.” MICHAELIS.

^o Or, “they went through the pass, they united their forces together.” Compare the description of this march, Isaiah x. 28, &c.

^p Or, “struck with panic, or precipitated.”

Elohim was in the city of our Elohim,
He hath established her for ever.

SELAH.

- 9 We wait, O El, thy tender love,^a
In the midst of thy temple.
- 10 According to thy name, O Elohim, so is thy praise,^r
Unto the ends of the earth.
- Thy right hand is filled with righteousness,
The hill of Zion is glad ;
- 11 The daughters of Judah rejoice,
Because of thy judgments.
- 12 Go round Zion, go round about her,
Survey^s her bulwarks,
- 13 Consider well her strength, distinguish her towers,
That ye may tell it to a future generation.^t
- 14 Surely this Elohim is our Elohim,
He is our leader for ever and ever.^u

^a "We have thought of thy loving kindness," rather, "We waited in tranquillity for, or we sat in tranquil expectation of thy mercy." HORSLEY.

^r "As thy name extends, so thy praise." F. and S.

^s "Consider," perhaps, 'take a plan of.'" HORSLEY. Spoken in irony

to the enemy.

^t Or, "the last generation, the second Gog and Magog, when Satan is released."

^u "The words עַל מִוֶּרֶת undoubtedly belong to the title of the following Psalm." HORSLEY. Kennicott would omit them.

EXPOSITION.

What appears upon the general inspection of this Psalm, is a display of the divine Majesty, on Mount Zion and Jerusalem. From this station God discomfits the combination of his adversaries, who are approaching Palestine, to besiege Jerusalem. If, as we shall suspect from the connexion in which we find the Psalm, this relates to the final victory of the Redeemer, over the earthly enemies of his church, in the battle of Armageddon, all the light that can be thrown at present upon the subject, must be borrowed from other prophecies.

Of the visible appearance of Jehovah, or of the divine Shechinah, on that favoured spot, with all the consequences foretold in this Psalm, we seem to have a clear prophecy, in Isaiah ivth, which may be thus rendered :

In that day there shall be a shoot of Jehovah,
Beauteous and glorious ;
Even a sprout from the earth,
Elevated and spreading its boughs,
For the escaped of Israel.

For there shall be that which remaineth in Zion,
And that which is left in Jerusalem :

Holy shall it be called,
Every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem,

When Jehovah hath washed away
The filth of the daughter of Zion :

And this blood of Jerusalem
Shall be removed from the midst of her,

By the spirit of judgment
And by the spirit of burning.

And Jehovah shall create
Over the station of Mount Zion,
And over her holy assemblies,

A cloud by day and pillars of mist,
And the brightness of a blazing fire by night :
For over all shall be the glory.

A protection and a cover shall it be,
For a shade in the day from heat ;

And for a refuge, and for a shelter
From winds and from rain.

In chapter xxivth of the same Prophet, we read, "Then shall the moon be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients, gloriously."

The fourth chapter of Micah contains also a prophecy, that represents Zion and Jerusalem, as the seat of Messiah's kingdom. "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all people shall flow unto it."—"And the Lord shall"—"reign in Mount Zion, from henceforth, even for ever. And thou, O Tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem."

The visible display of the Redeemer's glory in Zion, and the fixing of the throne of his kingdom at Jerusalem, seem to be clearly foretold in these prophecies as well as in the Psalm before us. But how we are to distinguish in the application of the prophecies between "the Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage with her children;" and the "Jerusalem which is above, the mother of us all," is the question. A reign on earth, however, is plainly predicted; and this Jerusalem is to come down from God out of heaven. And its localities must in some respects correspond with the site of the present Jerusalem.

We may ask again, what means the remarkable alteration in the features of this country, predicted in the xivth of Zechariah? "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east: and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof towards the east and towards the west, and there shall be a great valley:"—"living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them towards the former sea, and half of them towards the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one: all the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem, &c. &c."

The conflict and destruction of the enemy in the 4th and four following verses, is, beyond all doubt, that great expedition and final destruction of Antichrist, the perpetual subject of prophecy; when "he shall plant the tabernacles of

his palaces between the seas, in *the glorious holy mountain*; and shall come to his end, and none shall help him."^x

For this deliverance the preserved of Israel are represented as waiting in the holy temple. The very same line of march of the enemy is described Isaiah x. 28, and this siege of Jerusalem and its results is pictured at large in Isaiah xxix. with which compare Zech. xiv. After this rout of the enemy, Jerusalem is established for ever. Elohim is in the midst of her—and though a certain future attack is anticipated, it is in vain. Isaiah liv. Rev. xx. 7. &c.

^x Daniel xi. 45.

PSALM XLIX.^y

- 1 HEAR this, all ye nations,
Give ear all ye inhabitants of the world :^z
- 2 Both sons of Adam, and sons of great men,^a
The rich and the poor together.
- 3 My mouth shall speak wisdom,
And the language of my heart understanding.
- 4 I will incline mine ear to a parable,^b
I will open my enigma upon the harp.
- 5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil,
'When' the iniquity of my supplanters^c surrounds me :

^y Horsley translates the Hebrew title "Upon Death: to the Precentor a Song for the Sons of Korah."

^z "Dwellers in time." DR. LEE.

^a Perhaps, "Sons of men one with another."

^b "Things most wise, most worthy to be understood." מִשְׁלֵּל in general *carmen* et *poema* quodlibet, a figurata oratione veluti *carmen* propheticum, triumphale, lugubre, invectivum." SIMON.—חֵידָה "carmen quodlibet." Idem.—"My enigma; not an enigma of my making, but an enigma in my possession, which has been delivered to me. This verse is well paraphrased by Mr. Merrick.

The sense is, 'I will myself give attention to the instructive parables of revelation, and I will propound them in this ode to others.' HORSELEY. I am disposed to think, however, that "the inclining the ear," relates to the position of the minstrel, who, in accommodating his words to the tune, bends in an attentive posture over his harp, as if to catch the sounds.

^c "The wickedness of those who lie in wait for me, and endeavour to supplant me." LOWTH.—"Of those who plot against me." HORSELEY.—Literally, "my Jacobs." Those who would serve me as Jacob served Esau.

- 6 These are they who trust in their wealth,
And make their boast in their great riches—
- 7 No man can by any means redeem his brother,
Neither give to Elohim an atonement for him :
- 8 And, though costly were the price for their soul,
Yet would it ever fail :
- 9 That he might live on for ever,
That he might not see corruption.
- 10 For it is seen that wise men die ;
Together with the foolish and brutish they perish,
And leave their wealth for others.
- 11 Their inmost thought is that their houses shall be for ever,
Their dwelling-place from age to age,
They give their names to the lands.^d
- 12 Yet in his honour he doth not abide ;^e
He becomes like the beasts that silently perished.^f
- 13 This way of theirs is their folly,
Yet those that come after them delight in their maxims.^g

SELAH.

- 14 They are set apart^h like sheep for Hades ;
Death feedeth upon them, and they go down to them.

^d I cannot but think this to be the true sense of these lines, notwithstanding the ingenious expositions of Houbigant and Horsley. The 8th and following verses are however susceptible of the subsequent translation :

For costly was the ransom price for their souls ;
Yet he is deserted perpetually.*

But he shall be still for ever,
He shall not see corruption :

For he shall see the wise men die,
Together, the brutish and the foolish perish.

And they leave their wealth unto others,
Their sepulchres are their houses for ever,

Their dwelling-places from age to age :
They 'only' proclaim their names on the earth.

Bishop Horsley's translation is—

For costly is the ransom of their soul ;
And he that ceaseth for ever, yet shall live.

To all eternity he shall not see corruption,
Although he see it. Wise men die

Equally with the foolish and stupid,
They perish and leave their wealth to strangers.

Their inmost thought is that their houses are for ever,

Their dwellings from generation to generation ;
They call countries after their own names.

For קרבים all the versions appear to have read קברם which most critics adopt.

^e Or, "lie long."

^f For בל יליון the ancient versions read here יבין as in the 22d verse. Horsley renders these two lines,

For man, when he is in honour, will not understand ;
He is like the beasts that sink into nothing.

^g So Horsley.

^h שרץ *reponi, asservari* (v. e. ad suginatum veluti agni ad victimam destinati). SIM. Lex.—"Death is their shepherd." HORSLEY.—But I rather think the idea to be that death and hades are the two monsters for whose consumption this flock is destined.

* Or, "Truly costly was the ransom price of their souls,
And it has ceased for ever."—i.e. the one offering of Christ.

Their good conditionⁱ and their form 'are' for the tomb,
For the consumption^k of Hades is their cherishing.

- 15 But truly Elohim will redeem my soul,
He will take me even out of the hand of Hades.

SELAH.

- 16 Be not thou startled when a man becometh rich,
When the splendour of his house is increased.^l

- 17 For when he dieth he taketh nothing,
Neither doth his splendour descend after him.

- 18 For while he lived, he received his gratifications,^m
But he shall praise thee, because thou hast done well for thyself.

- 19 He shall go to the generation of his fathers,
To eternity theyⁿ shall not see light.^o

- 20 Man in 'his' honour, that hath no understanding,
Becomes like the beasts that silently perished.

ⁱ ישרים *rectitudines eorum*. Compare ישרון Deut. xxxii. "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked," and the

Arab. *يسر*

^k "בוק provender, q. d. consumption, something to consume. See Job xl. 15." PARKHURST.

^l "זבל *Fovendi* notionem ex conjectura primariam statuit." SCHROEDER.—"זבל part. pass. quasi *fozum* et locus *fozus*. h. e. quem quis fovet, ei incumbens quasi inhaerens perpetua inhabitazione." SIM. Lex.

^m Literally, "He blessed his soul," i. e. he received his gratifications; but

hereafter he shall praise thee, who by more prudent conduct providest for thy future happiness. "Son, remember, thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." HORSLEY.

ⁿ LXX.

^o "'Light.' Although the atheist shall arise, yet he shall never see that light which emphatically deserves the name; that light of which created light is but a faint image—the light of God's glory. He shall have no share in the beatific vision." HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

The Psalm before us might seem for the most part filled with moral observations on the folly of the prosperous sinner, who seeks his good in this present life, and despises religion. And the subject matter of this Psalm might seem to confine it

to no time nor to any particular person, yet as all the foregoing Psalms have immediate reference to the final struggles of the enemies of God, and the establishment of Christ's kingdom, in the latter days; we are prepared to suspect, at least, that this Psalm also concerns the same persons and times. And our suspicions will be increased when we recollect that it is clear from prophecies, that the character of the last days will in a very particular manner correspond with the language of the Psalm; and it is this that constitutes this Psalm a parable and enigma. The first stage of corruption, as is intimated in the sixth and following verses, is of those supplanters of Christ, or Antichrists, that count gain to be godliness, and through covetousness with feigned words make merchandise of holy things.

It is, however, clear from prophecy, that after superstition and idolatry shall have had their range in opposition to the Gospel, and shall be wearing out in their influence over mankind, there shall succeed times of a *sadducean* and atheistical cast; when men free from all constraints alike of religion and superstition, shall think only of enjoying the present life, and generally neglect or disbelieve the Gospel.

Paul was instructed to predict this: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men be lovers of their own selves, covetous,"—"Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."^p

St. Peter also speaks a similar language: "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" And our blessed Lord, in describing the days of the Son of man, represents a world at ease; the enjoyments of life abounding; trade and commerce flourishing; his coming forgotten; and his religion, except in the breast of a few, almost become an empty and antiquated form.

These false teachers and worldly politicians are "his supplanters," which the great Teacher and Prophet of his church foresees, and deprecates their successful opposition to his holy cause, especially in those emphatic "days of evil," when, in the last stage of the apostacy of Antichrist,

^p 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c.

atheism and worldly maxims shall have nearly rooted out all spiritual religion. Alas! how fast is this becoming the character of Christian nations at large!—How is the little family of Christ surrounded by these “supplanters” of Him who was once the acknowledged God of their fathers!

Not that they have preferred another religion; it is a distinctive mark of these times, that practically, riches, and the honours and enjoyments of the world which riches command, are become their gods, and have supplanted the Saviour in the hearts of his professing people.

How striking and beautiful are the reflections of the Psalm! What can riches do for dying mortals? Can they redeem from death? No: the prosperous worldling can gain no lasting distinction, except the monumental stone that blazons his name and titles on his tomb. Such is all the distinction that the great, the wise, and the valiant can obtain, who worship Mammon. And, notwithstanding this short distinction in their funereal honours, if they are without religion, they may be compared to the beasts that eat and drink to-day, and perish without notice to-morrow.

We are taught to contemplate with the eye of faith, all these worldlings, indulging themselves in luxury, riot, and intemperance, as a flock fed for the consumption of the monsters Death and Hell; and, perhaps, this metaphor of a flock fed for Death, and Hades, that follows after him, is employed by the Holy Spirit, not because one after another they die, and “go the way of all the earth;” but because, when things are got to this state in the outward church, the time is not distant when they will be overwhelmed in sudden destruction, and “go down alive into hell.” The Spirit has this in view when he speaks by Isaiah, “Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.”

The Saviour, verse 15th, next celebrates his own deliverance from death and hell: blessed pledge and earnest that his people shall never taste of death! This being the case, they should not envy the prosperity of infidels, which they may chance to witness: let them remember the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

PSALM L.^a

- 1 JEHOVAH hath spoken, and hath called the earth,
From the rising of the sun to its going down :
- 2 From Zion, the perfection of beauty, Elohim hath shined forth :
Our Elohim is come, and keepeth not silence.
- 3 A fire devoureth before his presence,
And around him the tempest violently rageth.
- 4 He calleth the heavens from above,
And the earth to the judgment of his people.
- 5 Gather ye unto me, my well-beloved,^r
Those who have made a covenant with me with sacrifice.
- 6 And let the heavens declare his righteousness,
For Elohim is judge himself.

SELAH.

- 7 Hear, O my people, for I will speak,
O Israel, for I will bear witness against thee :
I am Elohim, thy Elohim.
- 8 I reprove thee not concerning thy sacrifices,
Nor thy burnt offerings, that should have been ever before me.
- 9 I will take no bullock out of thine house,
Nor he-goats out of thy folds.
- 10 For all the beasts of the forest are mine,
The cattle upon a thousand hills.
- 11 I know all the fowls of the heavens,^s
And the beasts of the chase in the field are with me.^t

^a The inscription of this Psalm is, **אֵל מְזַמֵּר לְאַסָּף** and I conceive **אֵל הַיָּם** with which the Psalm is made to begin, belongs in reality to the title: "A Psalm of," or "for Asaph, concerning Elohim or God."

^r "The objects of grace, or loving kindness."

^s All the versions appear to have read **הַשָּׁמַיִם**

^t "Chald. *se movere, moveri*: Arab. *cucurrit*." SIM. LEX.

- 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee,
For the world and its fulness are mine.
- 13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls?
Or do I drink the blood of goats?
- 14 The sacrifice of Elohim is praise,
And the offering of the highest are thy vows.
- 15 Then call upon me in the day of distress,
And I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.
- 16 But to the wicked 'one' Elohim hath said,
What concerneth thee to recite my statutes?
And why takest thou my covenant in thy mouth?
- 17 For thou hast hated instruction,
And hast cast my words behind thee.
- 18 When thou hast seen a thief, thou hast become his accomplice,"
And thy portion was with the adulterers.
- 19 Thou hast let loose thy mouth to evil,
And with thy tongue hast thou framed deceit.
- 20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother,*
Thou revilest the son of thy mother.
- 21 These things hast thou done, and I was silent,
And thou didst imagine that I was altogether such as thyself.[†]
But I will reprove thee, and set out thy deeds before thee.
- 22 Consider this, ye that forget Eloah,
Lest I tear you in pieces, and there be no deliverer.
- 23 He who sacrificeth praise honoureth me,
And in this way I will visit him with the salvation of Elohim.[‡]

[†] Συμπεριεχες αὐτῷ, i.e. you helped him to carry off his booty, and to make his escape." HORSLEY.

* "Your table-talk is abuse of your nearest friends." Idem.

[‡] "Thou hast thought that I AM is such an one as thyself. I will call thee to account, and will be thy adversary to thy face." Idem. Or, "that I must surely be like, &c."

[‡] Bishop Horsley has: "And him that sets in order his course." He observes, however, "The LXX. and Vulg. render שם דרך as an adverb, 'In this way.' And this interpretation Dr. Durell and Bishop Lowth in Merrick adopt." Perhaps, "And here I will show him the way to the salvation of God."

EXPOSITION.

I am persuaded that the ancient Jewish interpreters^a were right, who explained this Psalm of the day of judgment—that, at least, it relates to the coming of Christ at the first resurrection and to the judgment that then ensues. Nations, from one extremity of the earth to another, are interested in this judgment, though death and hell are not, as at the last judgment, summoned to give up all the dead that are in them.

“From Zion,” rendered, as was intimated in a former Psalm, “the perfection of beauty” by the divine presence, the judgment goes forth: God is no longer a silent spectator of the conflict that disturbs the nations upon earth—“He doth utter his voice, yea, and that a mighty voice.” The fire and raging tempest, the usual symbols of the judgment of the divine majesty, are noticed:—“His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him.”

The heavens and earth are called to the judgment of his people; that is, to see him execute justice on behalf of his people, in giving them the promised reward, in separating the hypocrites from the faithful, and in avenging them of their enemies.—“Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.”

The first process of this judgment is, to assemble the objects of his free love and grace: they are designated as being in covenant with God, that is, as having made with him, by his appointment, *a league of reconciliation over a victim slain*: which is the true meaning of the word in the sacred original which we render *covenant* or *testament*, and ought always to be kept in view when we speak of the covenants of God. The language of the verse before us we cannot mistake: it represents those who were once far off, as being now brought nigh by the blood of Christ—his “blood

^a “The *Targum*, *Kimchi*, and *R. Obediah Gaon*, interpret this Psalm of the day of judgment; and *Jarchi* takes it to be a prophecy of the redemption by their future Messiah.” DR. GILL.

of the new testament or covenant," as himself speaks respecting its sacramental sign, "shed for many for the remission of sins:" they are those, as is afterwards intimated, whose work is praise, "who rejoice in God, having received the reconciliation;"—"and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

It is now that He "who appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, appears a second time without sin;" that is, without the imputed sin of his covenanted people, "unto salvation"—that they may receive perfect redemption, both in body and soul. The heavens are now to declare his righteousness; "how he is just, and yet the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus"—"a just God and a Saviour." God is judge himself: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," &c. And he it is who is to judge the quick and dead at his appearing and kingdom.

Two other parties are next, as it seems to me, pointed out in this judgment—*Israel*, that is, the Israel after the flesh, and the *wicked one*, that is, the great Antichristian apostate with his votaries and followers. The judgment of Israel after the flesh, is contained in the 7th and eight following verses; the judgment of Antichrist in all his manifestations, whether as "the wicked one," or, "the man of sin," or "the rebel," occupies the remainder of the Psalm till near the end.

The crime of Israel is, that they had sottishly substituted the ceremonials of religion in the place of its grand essentials, which are represented (ver. 14) as being praise, or rather more generally, confession—all that sacred psalmody embraces; and, the payment of their vows. By the former we are, beyond all doubt, to understand that confession of the mouth unto salvation, when the heart believeth unto righteousness, of which St. Paul teaches us, Rom. x. 9; and by the latter, the grateful surrender of the redeemed sinner,

constrained by the love of God "to present himself a lively sacrifice to him." Now, we know that this character, here ascribed to the remnant of Israel, agrees exactly with the character of the Jews when they rejected their Messiah on the first preaching of the Gospel among them: but do we find any intimation that, at Christ's second coming, there will be a body of the Jews held together by these formalities, so that, though there may then be a remnant according to the election of grace, the character here given will still apply to Israel after the flesh as a nation?^b

I believe that something like this is plainly intimated in other prophetic Scriptures. "All Israel" is to be saved in the issue; and "the Redeemer is to come to Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob;" but this, it appears, is not till after "the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion,"—"and the blood of Jerusalem shall be removed from the midst of her by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning." And we may say in general, that all the prophecies that go into detail respecting the affairs of the Jews after their restoration, prepare us for this. In Zechariah the Spirit mysteriously speaks of "a third part, which HE will bring through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: and I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God."^c When Daniel, also, is told of the deliverance of Israel, when Michael the great Prince standeth up, the language of the angel seems still to distinguish a particular seed: "At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

The professed Jewish church, therefore, it should seem, will be an object of judgment in the day of Christ's appearing, as well as the apostate churches of Christendom.

The part of the Psalm that describes the judgment of the *wicked one* is exactly parallel to the Apostle's description of the professors of the last days: (ver. 16)—"they have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof." (ver. 17)—

^b See my work on Unfulfilled Prophecies.

^c Chap. xiii. 9.

The times are come, when "men will not endure sound doctrine" (ver. 18)—but are "covetous, incontinent;" (ver. 19)—"speaking lies in hypocrisy:" (ver. 20)—"truce-breakers," "false accusers," "without natural affection:" (ver. 21)—practical atheists.

Sudden destruction is announced to such, when, as St. Paul tells us, in language remarkably coincident with the Psalm before us, "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance of them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power: when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." The sacrifice of praise, spoken of in the last verse, is the believer's sacrifice, as noticed above.

PSALM LI.

- 1 BE gracious to me, O Elohim, according to thy tender love ;
According to the greatness of thy compassion blot out my rebellion.
- 2 O wash me thoroughly from my guilt,
And make me clean from my sin.
- 3 For I know my rebellion,
And my sin is continually before me.
- 4 To thee, to thee alone have I been a sinner,^d
And that which was evil in thine eyes have I done.

So that thou art just in thy declaration,
And art clear in thy sentence.

^d "Singulare quid est חַטָּאתִי לְךָ te conscio peccavi." SIM. Lex. The true meaning of חַטָּאתִי in construction with לְךָ appears to be, *to sin to a per-*

son, that is, in his view and estimation. See Genesis xliii. 9; xliv. 32; Numb. xxxii. 23.

- 5 Behold, in guilt was I shapen in the womb,^e
And in sin did my mother conceive me.
- 6 Behold, thou hast desired truth in the inward part,
And in the hidden part thou wilt cause me to know wisdom.
- 7 Thou canst purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Thou canst wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 8 Thou canst make me to hear exultation and rejoicing,
The bones thou hadst broken shall leap for joy.
- 9 Hide thy face from my sin,
And blot out all my guilt.
- 10 Create me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a right spirit within me.^f
- 11 Let me not be cast off from thy presence,
And let not thy Holy Spirit be taken from me.
- 12 Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,
And let thy bountiful Spirit support me.^g
- 13 I will teach the rebellious thy ways,
And sinners shall be converted to thee.
- 14 Absolve me, O Elohim, from 'the guilt of' blood,
O Elohim of my salvation.
- 15 My tongue shall sing thy righteousness, O Lord;
Thou wilt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare thy
praise.

^e See Simon in חול Or, "brought forth in labour."

^f It would be as correct, perhaps, to translate this line: "Make within me a new and right spirit."

^g "Spontaneously flowing." But נדיב is more still: it signifies to flow, both spontaneously and plentifully:—"præ ubertate succi sponte fluens," and compare נדיב נדיב *avidus fuit, uberi succo fluxit.* "A plentiful

effusion of spirit." MUDGE. This epithet of the indwelling Spirit will be best explained from our Lord's own words, John iv. 14, and vii. 38. "The water that I shall give him shall be a well of water springing up to everlasting life."—"He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit."

- 16 For thou desirest no sacrifice that I could give,
An offering thou wouldest not accept.
- 17 The sacrifices of Elohim are a broken spirit ;
A heart broken and contrite, O Elohim, thou dost not despise.
- 18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion,
Build the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 Then wilt thou desire the proper sacrifices, an offering, and a
holocaust ;
Then shall they offer steers upon thine altar.

EXPOSITION.

The justness of the remarks which Bishop Horsley has made, on the title found in the Hebrew affixed to this Psalm, must I think be allowed by all : " That this Psalm was not written upon the occasion to which the title refers, is evident from the 4th and 18th verses. The 4th ill suits the case of David, who laid a successful plot against Uriah's life, after he had defiled his bed ; and the 18th verse refers the Psalm to the times of the captivity, when Jerusalem lay in ruins." He entitles it, " The penitential Confession of the converted Jews : " and though I have been somewhat slow in acquiescing in this idea of the Psalm, yet I am at length induced fully to adopt it.

In the last Psalm, which represented the coming of the appointed Judge, we saw the reproof to which his people Israel were subjected. The nation is described in the view of this second advent, as being much in the same state, as when they were " broken off from their native olive," in the Apostle's days : " going about to establish their own righteousness," as it were by the deeds of the law, and substituting the carnal commandment in the room of that *confession* which the penitent sinner makes unto salvation. We have seen cause to suppose, that the eve of the day of Christ will find a people of this description ; " the veil still upon their hearts." Now, when this veil shall be taken away, and Israel shall turn to the Lord, we shall immediately perceive

that the language of this Psalm will be exactly suitable to their awakened consciences, so long beguiled with the mistaken notion of their own righteousness. It is a language which Saul of Tarsus, or one of the better sort of Pharisees, or any man of a strict moral and religious character, religious I mean, as to his external observances, would use on the occasion of his conversion to God.

The awakened sinner begins to cry for grace and mercy; the Pharisee ranges himself by the side of the publican, and smites upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner:" he now submits to the righteousness of God, "O wash me from my guilt," &c. Like Paul, who once saw himself blameless as touching the law, but who, when the commandment came in spirit and power to his heart, felt himself the chief of sinners; so the penitent exclaims, I know my rebellion, and my sin is ever before me. The 4th verse evidently describes a mind convinced of secret guilt, in the presence of a heart-searching God; a guilt that He only could discover; for all was outwardly fair: so that God is acknowledged just in all the judgments he has pronounced upon these self-justifiers. A summary of these judgments we find in the ii^d of Romans, which "the law said to them that were under the law;" but to which the contumacious Jew pleaded, at that time, "not guilty," and despised the offers of mercy, through Christ.

And here we discover the true point of application in the Apostle's quotation of these words, Romans, iii. 4.

An objection had been started in that epistle, that the rejection of Israel called in question "the faithfulness of God."—"God forbid!" says the Apostle. "Let God be true, and every man a liar; as it is written, *that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.*" This is as much as to say, "the conscience of the awakened Israelite acquits God of all injustice in his sentence on him and on his countrymen.—And all Israel will one day own it." Indeed, nothing more is necessary to convince us of the justice of God, in his general condemnation of mankind, than such a conviction of original sin, and of the purity and spirituality of the law, as the 5th and 6th verses of the Psalm before us so plainly portray.

Now, "the mind of Israel is no longer blinded:" "that same veil," which, as the Apostle observed of the Jews of his time, "remained untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament," is at the time anticipated in the Psalm, "done away in Christ:" the penitent now perceives what Moses meant by the ceremonial law, and views the plan of salvation, through the atonement of Jesus Christ: applying, in the 7th and 8th verses, the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb, and the various washings of the law, to that one sacrifice for sin.

The 9th and three following verses pray for the sanctifying effects of that sacrifice, and for the unfolding of the work of the Spirit according to the promise which still awaits them and their children. For these lines are particularly descriptive of the new covenant, as applied to the restored Jew. The Spirit to be poured out upon them never more to be withdrawn from them or from their children, that they may inherit the land for ever. And this miraculous outpouring of the Spirit upon Israel, will be the rain of the harvest to all the world, as the effusion of the same Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the rain of the seed time to the Gospel church.

The 13th verse evidently anticipates a scene of future usefulness for the restored Israelites, in the conversion of the rebellious nations: and such we discover from prophecy, to be the purpose of God concerning them, in many remarkable passages. The meaning of "the guilt of blood," which the penitent bewails in the 14th verse, we easily discover on this plan of exposition: it is none other than the guilt of the blood of the Lord of Glory, which their forefathers imprecated "upon themselves and upon their children"—this is, "the blood of Jerusalem, that must be purged." (Isaiah, iv.) And the prophecy of Joel ends with a remarkable declaration respecting the consummation of mercy to Israel in the latter days: "But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the Lord dwelleth in Zion."

Verse 16th is illustrated by the former Psalm: no sacri-

fice is required according to the ancient ceremonial; they could legally offer no sacrifice till the temple was rebuilt; but a due sense of their national guilt in crucifying the Lord of Glory. This surely is the meaning of the remarkable prophecy, Zechariah xii. 9, &c. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem, and I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon."

The anticipation of the acceptableness of sacrifice, when Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, I formerly thought was to be understood of spiritual sacrifices of the new Jerusalem from above. It appears, however, from the last chapters of Ezekiel, and from other scriptures, that some ceremonial sacrifices, though not of the Mosaical law, are again to be imposed on Israel after the flesh; not merely, I now think, preparatory to the appearance of the Messiah on his second advent, but as actually forming the ritual of restored Jerusalem in the world to come, and is not to be understood as only *symbolical* of the spiritual worship of the church triumphant.

PSALM LII.

1 WHY gloriest thou in evil, O man of shame? ^b

Thou art forming ambitious projects all the day long;

2 Thy tongue, like a sharp knife, frameth deceit. ⁱ

^b Or, ironically, "O mighty man of grace." Isaiah xxxii. 5. Compare Dr. Lee in Verbum.

ⁱ On the supposition that the LXX. read עָמַל instead of דָּבַר and transposing אֵל Bishop Horsley would propose the following translation:

Why exultest thou in wickedness,
O thou that art mighty in injustice?
Continually art thou plotting mischief;

Thy tongue is like a sharp razor,
An engine of treachery.

Or, with the versions omitting אֵל and adopting the more usual sense of דָּבַר

Why exultest thou in wickedness?
The man of love shall be continually.

Or, retaining אֵל

Why boastest thou wickedly,
"The man of grace 'shall' not 'be' continually?"

3 Thou hast loved evil more than good—

Falsehood more than the word of truth:—SELAH.

4 Thou hast loved all injurious words, thou deceitful tongue.

5 Thee too will El pull down unto the end ;

He will lay hold upon thee and pluck thee out of the tabernacle,
And thy root out of the land of the living.

SELAH.

6 Then the righteous shall see and revere,

And shall taunt him.

7 Lo ! this is the mighty man that would not make Elohim his
strong hold,

But trusted in the multitude of his riches, and was strong in
wickedness : ^k

8 But I am like a fresh olive-tree in the house of Elohim ;

I trusted in the tender love of Elohim for ever and ever. ^l

9 I will praise thee to cternity when thou hast done it ;

I will wait for thy name, for it is good in the presence of thy
beloved.

^k Or, " in his substances."

^l Or, " enduring for ever."

EXPOSITION.

"The man of shame," or, "the man of shameful wickedness," I conceive to be none other than "the wicked one" of the Lth Psalm ; that is to say, "the man of sin," or "Antichrist," at large, of the New Testament : the head of apostate Christendom. It appears, that at the second advent, when in the remnant of Israel will be found "a people made ready for the Lord,"—the Antichristian powers will be up in arms against that which will prove the cause of Christ, and will perish in opposition to Him that leadeth the armies of heaven : these are "the wicked" "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." ^m

The ambitious projects of "the man of sin," his tongue

^m 2 Thess. ii. 8.

"framing deceit," as with a nicely edged tool, is exactly parallel to St. Paul's "working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders," and "all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." And to that symbolical representation of the sixth vial: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

Who, indeed, can he be who is represented in the Psalm before us, "to be plucked out of the tabernacle," but that presumptuous being "the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is a God?" He that is no shadow but the very image of Antichrist, "the man of cutting tongue," who by his deceitful lies and great words against the Most High, first corrupted Christendom from its allegiance to the only Mediator, and at length placed his leader or chief priest as an object of worship in the very house of God; and though not the greatest amongst the rebel crew at the time of the end, perishes as the false prophet, aiding the apostate rulers and the devil.

The righteous, or justified ones, contemplate his fall with holy awe: and the Psalm in one verse, draws the character of Antichrist. This is the man that trusted not in God, but trusted in his riches and in his own crooked policy: as St. John characterizes the same wicked crew,^a "supposing that gain is godliness."^o

The flourishing condition of the mystic body of Christ, the true church, after the war of Antichrist is over, is represented by "the fresh olive-tree." She praises God for what he has done, in the infliction of vengeance on her foes: while she waits for him who cometh, to be glorified with his saints, "and to be admired in all them that believe."—"Rejoice over her (the fallen Babylon) thou heaven, and ye holy apostles, and prophets; for God hath avenged you of her."

^a 1 John ii.

^o 1 Tim. vi. 5.

PSALM LIII.^p

- 1 THE wretch hath said in his heart, "There is no Elohim."
 They are corrupt—they have done abominable deeds—
 There is none that doth good.
- 2 Jehovah looked down from heaven upon the children of men,
 To see if there were any that understood,
 Inquiring after Elohim.
- 3 They are all gone astray—they are altogether corrupt:
 There is none that doeth good,
 Not even one.
- 4 Did not all the workers of iniquity know,
 When they devoured my people as they devour food?
 Did they not proclaim Jehovah's name?
- 5 A sudden panic has seized them; Where no fear was!^q

Truly Elohim hath scattered the bones of him that was encamped
 against thee;

Thou hast put them to shame, because Elohim hath despised
 them.

- 6 O that the salvation of Israel were given out of Zion!
 When Jehovah restoreth his captive people,
 Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

^p For Notes see Psalm XIV.

^q "Where they had no apprehensions."

EXPOSITION.

Except in a variation found in the 5th verse, this Psalm is the same as the XIVth. We may refer, therefore, to that part of our exposition for its general meaning: remarking only, that it was in the former copy meant to be applied to the professors of revealed religion at the first advent of our Lord; but as forming part of the present series, the

application intended is to the professors of revealed religion at the time of the second advent.

The same language is thought proper to delineate the characters of both—a plain prediction, that the churches of the Christian dispensation would at length be found in the same corrupted state as the disciples of Moses were, when their Messiah appeared in the flesh—that the corruption of fallen nature would show itself in a similar manner, among professed Christians, in the perversion of the true religion, and in the cruel persecution of the humble followers of the Redeemer, as it had done among the children of Israel after the flesh.

The variation made in the 5th verse, in the adoption of the Psalm into the present series, contains a plain intimation of the fate of Antichrist, and his armies, in his last expedition into Palestine, of which we have read so much before.

The oracle ends, as in the XIVth Psalm, with a prayer for the coming of salvation out of Zion. In the former series, where the Jews are contemplated as the apostate and persecuting church, the prayer is offered, because, till this salvation appear, Israel after the flesh will never exist as “a faithful people.” In the present series, the prayer is retained, because, though the Christians and not the Jews are the apostate persecutors; yet the appearance of the same “salvation out of Zion,” is that event which will alone put an end to this corruption and persecution.

PSALM LIV.

- 1 SAVE me, O Elohim, by thy name,
And by thy might maintain my cause.
- 2 O Elohim, hear my prayer,
Give ear to the words of my mouth.

- 3 For enemies' have risen up against me,
And oppressors have sought after my life;
They set not Elohim before them.

SELAH.

- 4 Behold, Elohim is my help,
The Lord is all the support of my soul.^a
- 5 He requiteth the ill to mine adversaries;^b
In thy truth hast thou cut them off.
- 6 Most freely will I sacrifice to thee,
And will praise thy name, O Jehovah, for it is good;
- 7 Aye, thou hast delivered^c me out of all my distress,
And mine eye hath looked 'in triumph' upon mine enemies.

^a "Strangers," or "proud ones."

^b Literally, "Jehovah is among the supports of my soul."

^c Or, "causes the ill they aimed at me to fall back upon themselves."

^a The Septuagint, Vulgate, &c. read *דָּוָלְתִּי* "The preterite is used in this distich, as expressive of confidence in future mercies." HOSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

The connexion in which we find this Psalm, can be our only guide to its application; and this leads us to refer it to the church in the latter days. The manner in which her enemies are characterised at the end of the 3rd verse, "They set not God before them," has led the commentator, whom of all others I am most disposed to follow, to entitle the Psalm, "A Prayer for Protection against the atheistical Conspiracy."

A strong impression has been left upon the minds of most who have made the scriptural prophecies their study, that the last struggle of Christ's holy religion will be with practical atheism, and not so much with superstition, idolatry, or any such corruption of religion, as had generally been the character of the warfare of the church in former ages. It is thought that the wrongs of the church of Christ, in the last days, will be from a world that has cast off all religion—that men in those "perilous times" pursuing the gains of traffic, cultivating the elegancies of life, or specu-

lating in the higher regions of fancy or philosophy, will be satisfied to live without God in the world—that the standard of public morals will, indeed, be alarmingly debased; but “the master-builders” of the day will scorn the aid of revelation, lightly regard the ordinances of religious worship, and, in the most avowed form, become the opposers of the religion of Jesus Christ, but yet, strange to say, he that had erected the idol image of the beast,—the false prophet, is aiding and abetting in all this! And if we consider the general character of the Christian nations at the present time, how plainly are all the seeds sown, that will produce this harvest of wickedness!—Are not the fields white already to the harvest?

But the church of Christ will triumph over this enemy too: the struggle is short, and the victory is the decisive victory that terminates all the controversy of Zion.

PSALM LV.

1 GIVE ear, O Elohim, to my prayer,
And hide not thyself from my petition :

2 Attend unto me, and hear me.
I am depressed in my thoughts ^v and am confused,

3 At the voice of the enemy
Before the pressure of the wicked one ;

For they rush upon me ^w with violence,^{*}
And assault me with fury.

^v “I am brought low with my anxiety, and am distracted,” HORSLEY.
“**עָרַד** *evagabor* in querelis meis.”
SIM. Lex. **תְּהִימָה** *tumultuatus sum* :
I flutter in my thoughts and tumultuate.

^w **יָבִיטוּ עָלַי** “They make a move upon me,” as we speak of the

action of a rushing crowd.

^{*} **אָנָּן** signifies that activity and exertion of strength which men put forth after an interval of rest. Com-

pare **אָנָּן** in Arab. Lex. Or, “they bring mischief upon me.” GRS.

- 4 My heart is in travail within me,^y
And the terrors of death have fallen upon me.
- 5 Fear and trembling are come upon me,
And a horror hath overwhelmed me.
- 6 And I said, O that I had wings!
As a dove would I fly away and find a rest.
- 7 Lo ! far away should be my flight,^z
I would settle in the desert. SELAH.
- 8 I would hasten to my refuge from the impetuous blast,
From the overwhelming storm.^a
- 9 O Lord, divide their tongue,^b
For I have suffered violence.
- 10 And contention is in the city^c by day,
And at night it compasseth about her walls.
- 11 And iniquity and mischief are in the midst of her ;
Cupidity is within her, and departeth not ;
In her street is treachery and deceit.
- 12 Truly not an enemy could have dishonored^d me and I have
borne it ;
Neither was it my adversary that raised himself against me,
So that I could shelter myself from him :
- 13 But thou, a man of my ordaining,^e
My guide, and my acknowledged ' friend ;'

^y חָלַל de tremore maxime parturientium.

^z Literally, "Far would I go, flying."

^a STREET.

^b "Dividere linguam est dissidium efficere, respectu habitus ad Gen. xi. 7, seq." SIMON.

^c רִיב generally signifies a contest, but here rather a tumultuous stir or commotion. Comp. רָאב רָאב turbatus est.

^d "Stripped me—made bare my branches by plucking off my fruit." Or, "Who challenged so that I lifted up 'my hand in defence.'" The versions, favoured by the construction, read לָךְ for לָא in these two lines. The translation will then be, "If an enemy had"—"then I could, &c."

^e "According to my ordering or arranging"—my guide—a person considered as trustworthy, and therefore appointed as a leader in war, or on any expedition.

14 Aye, we tasted the sweetness of counsel together,^f
In the house of Elohim we went in the festive throng.

15 Desolations are upon them ;
They go down alive into the abode of the dead.

Surely wickedness is in their habitations !
16 In the midst of them 'am' I.

Unto Elohim I call, and Jehovah heareth me.
17 Evening and morning and at noon
I cry and moan, and he heareth my voice.^g

18 "Redeem my soul in peace,
From them that are near unto me ;
For they are those who contend with me."

19 El heareth and will humble them,
Yea, he sitteth enthroned from everlasting.

SELAH.

Because they have no vicissitudes,^h
Therefore they fear not Elohim.

20 He has laid his hand on him that was at peace with him,
He hath violated his covenant.

21 Softer than butter were his lips,
But war was in his heart.

Smoother than oil were his words,
Yet were they drawn swords.

22 Cast thy burden on Jehovah,
And he will nourish thee.

^f "Such were we who caused, or were accustomed to cause, sweetness together." "Who tasted," or tested the sweetness of counsel together.

^g I inwardly pine and am distracted, but he doth hear my voice.

^h Or, perhaps, "interchanged oaths," or "faithfulness to such oaths." Comp. **حلف** Voluit, con-

voluit, glomeravit; hinc reciprocavit et edentidem repetit, undo fortasse est

notio *Jurando*, **حلف** fides in ser-

vando pacto. "Because with them can be no interchanged oaths, and they fear not Elohim."

He will not permit for ever
The displacingⁱ of the righteous.

23 Thou, O Elohim, shalt bring them down
Into the pit of destruction.

The men of blood and of deceit
Shall not reach half their days :
Therefore will I trust on thee.

ⁱ 'Moving,' 'tossing,' or 'slipping.'

EXPOSITION.

We have only to attend to the connexion in which we find this Psalm, and to bear in mind the common subject of which the preceding Psalms have treated, and we shall be immediately led to fix upon its true application. The Psalm contains the distressful cries of the Gospel church in apprehension of the rising and prevailing power of the great Antichrist: nor will this interpretation of the Psalm be found gratuitous: we shall find points of resemblance both in the character and in the fate of the enemy here adverted to, which agree with the fate and character of this adversary, and of none besides.

The five first verses, therefore, are to be considered as the prayer and lamentation of the afflicted church, either as proceeding from her own mouth, or rather as offered on her behalf by her great Advocate, touched with the feeling of the infirmities of his mystical body, as Augustin remarks in his preface to this Psalm—"the head and the members are one Christ. The head was in heaven, and 'Saul why persecutest thou me?' We are with him in heaven by hope; he with us on earth by love." In the city, called spiritually Jerusalem, while she was trodden under foot of the Gentiles, (professed Christendom) there were those "that sighed and cried for the abominations that were done in the midst thereof;" when "the Antichrist" was "revealed," still some were found faithful, even those "who were found written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world."

The prayer for wings to fly away into the wilderness, like a dove from the approaching storm, is highly characteristic of the desire of the faithful believer, to retire into privacy from the scenes of corruption and violence, which prevail in times of apostacy and confusion: thus we find the Prophet Jeremiah exclaiming, as if in the person of his master, "Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people and go from them! for they are all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men: and they bend their tongues, like their bow for lies; but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord."^k

Such will ever be the sentiment of the children of God, while they dwell in the midst of corrupt and apostate churches, and in times when wickedness abounds: but there is a special allusion in this prayer, to the secret retirement of the true church, during the successful tyranny of Antichrist. The answer to her prayer is thus represented in the figurative language of the Revelation (xii. 14:) "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." Speaking of a certain period in the history of the church, Mr. Milner observes, "we must now look for the real church, either in distinct individual saints, who, in the midst of **POPERY**, were preserved by effectual grace in vital union with the Son of God, or in associations of true Christians, formed in different regions, which were in a state of persecution and much affliction."

The imprecation, beginning with the 9th verse, "divide their tongues," is designed to remind us of the fate of those who were engaged in erecting the tower of Babel, and to point out the mystic Babylon as intended to be portrayed by the wicked and rebellious city, in which the people of God had suffered violence. The two next verses afford but too true a picture of apostate Christendom.

The 12th and 13th verses are much to be noticed: they

^k Jer. ix. 2, 3.

have often been applied to Ahitophel and to Judas: but their true application will be found, I am persuaded, in this connexion.

We have only to consider a great leading character in the Antichristian confederacy, that remarkable power which by art and subtlety wielded, for so many years, the whole force of the Roman empire against the saints of the Most High, and we shall immediately perceive the allusion.

This grand attack, that laid prostrate the church for 1260 years, was not conducted by an open enemy, by an adversary against whom the church might have been upon her guard. Neither was it immediately from a spiritual foe. It was a mortal man that was at the head of the confederacy, a man regularly ordained, in virtue of the institution of Christ, to a high office in the church, one of the leaders of the Christian army, and considered as a friend, one who in former times had assisted with friendly counsels, and had been faithful with the saints. All this description of the Christ-supplanting heresy, though a season of greater violence or treachery may still be witnessed, agrees well with the Bishop of Rome, once a truly apostolical bishop, and a leading pastor in the church; but at length manifested to be "the wicked one" of the Scripture, or his express image, perhaps clearest manifestation of "the man of sin"—"the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."¹

But, as we learn from the 15th verse, "the destruction" of these apostates, "now for a long time lingereth not:" "they go down alive into hell." This destiny determines who is the enemy intended: not Absalom and his party, nor Judas, nor the Jews of the first advent; for no such fate attended their rebellion: but the Papacy, or the false prophet who made this image of the beast, and the different branches of the Antichristian apostacy of the last days: for we read of them, "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, with

¹ 2 Thessalonians ii. 3, 4.

which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast ALIVE *into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.*"^m This circumstance demonstrates, I think to a certainty, that the application here given to the Psalm before us, is the only true one.

The seventeenth and following verses, describe again the church in her distress, under the oppression of the antichristian powers, as engaged in prayer to God. And I am led to think, that two distinct periods are pointed out, one of contest or open violence, the other of secret hate under the mask of corrupting flattery. The three first verses of this portion of the Psalm complain of injury from those who are near in kindred, or in relation to the Sufferer.—The everlasting Judge will humble them. The next four verses seem to point out a foe of another description; or rather, perhaps, the altered mode of attack which the humbled enemy, not less in hatred, has adopted against the church. The former are distinguished in the 23d verse, as "the men of blood;" the latter as "men of deceit;" and they fall together into the pit of destruction.

It seems agreeable to the general burden of prophecy, that the Antichristian confederacy towards the end, shall alter much its character; that though the old persecuting power shall still form a member, yet it will be reduced in importance; and another system of deceitful flattery, terminating in the most impious treachery, shall complete the measure of the church's wrongs, and lead to the threatened vengeance. Have we not lived to see in part, this change in the character of the foes of religion?

This last stage of the apostacy was to follow a season of peace and prosperity, a more settled order of things than the world had usually known: "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God." And when we compare the history of modern Europe with this prophecy, how exactly does it correspond with the prediction! Europe, from the season of the humbling of the Papacy, and the check put to its bloody persecutions, enjoyed a long season of

^m Revelation xix. 20.

prosperity ; more, perhaps, of public quiet and private happiness, than mankind had enjoyed upon earth. But what was the effect? The growth of impiety and profaneness, and of that lying philosophy which spake so fair, but whose deceit and treachery have at length been made pretty manifest: or, adopting the other sense of the words, an artful enemy is described on whom no oaths are binding.

PSALM LVI.^a

- 1 BE gracious to me, O Elohim, for man panteth^o for me ;
Contending, he oppresseth me all the day long.
- 2 My adversaries pant^o for me all the day long,
Truly many fight against me from on high.^p
- 3 In the day of my fear I will put my trust in thee ;
Elohim will I praise : he hath spoken :^q
- 4 Therefore in Elohim I have put my trust,
Nor will I fear what flesh can do to me.
- 5 All the day long they wrest my words against me,
All their thoughts are on mischief.
- 6 They assemble ; they are on the watch ;
They mark my steps as though they expected my life.^r
- 7 In vain is their hope^s of escape ;
In anger hast thou brought down the nations, O Elohim.

^a It is hardly necessary to repeat a former remark, that the meaning of the titles of the Psalms is to the utmost degree uncertain; and that the opinion which refers them to the tune or music, is by far the most probable. Bishop Horsley has translated the title of the present Psalm : " To the Giver of Victory, concerning the Doves, the Band of those who are in a far Country : a mystical or figurative Psalm of David."—"Doves"—"those who are in a far country"—"the faithful in a state of persecution among the hea-

then."

^o Horsley thinks the ancient reading was *תַּרְסָא* for *תַּרְסָא* to *trample under foot, or bruise*; the same word used of the enmity of the serpent, and of the woman's seed, Gen. iii. 15, &c.

^p Perhaps, "with elevated neck or crest."

^q "God shall be the theme of my praise: he hath passed his word: therefore," &c. HORSLEY.

^r "As if it could not escape them." GEDDES.

^s Or, "in vanity is their hope," &c.

- 8 Thou hast taken account of my griefs,^t
 Thou hast laid up^u my tears in thy vessel :
 Are they not, O Jehovah,^s in thy book ?
- 9 Then shall mine enemies be turned back when I call ;
 This I know, for Elohim is mine.
- 10 Elohim shall be the theme of my praise ; he hath spoken :
 Jehovah shall be the theme of my praise, he hath spoken.
- 11 In Elohim have I put my trust,
 Nor fear I what man can do unto me.
- 12 Unto thee, O Elohim, have I made my vows,
 I will give praises unto thee.
- 13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death,
 And my feet^v from falling :
 That I should walk before Elohim
 In the light of the living.

^t נָדַי *vagatio mea, exilium meum*:
 but see the verb.

^u Kennicott considers שִׁמְרָה as
 used for שִׁמְרָה

^s CHALDEE.

^v HORSLEY: who observes, "Arch-
 bishop Seeker judged the negation
 here to be a corruption. We have no
 trace of it either in the Sept. or Syr."

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley supposes the Messiah to be the speaker throughout this Psalm: this we may admit: but we must consider him, I think, not as speaking of his own personal conflict in the days of his flesh; but in the character of the Mediator and Advocate of his church, praying for the members of his mystical body, still suffering upon earth. The "bringing down of the nations in anger," is an event which clearly connects the subject of the Psalm with the SECOND ADVENT.

The six first verses will, therefore, apply to all the persecuted people of God, from the time their Master sent them

forth "as sheep in the midst of wolves," until he shall come to wipe away the reproach of his people from off the earth, nor is it impossible that there is a mystical allusion to the remnant of Israel in their state of exile afar off from their own land, to which we know they are to return, "as doves to their windows."

At length we arrive at the expected season, when, as is said in a later prophecy, "the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come." In the interim, as the words of the Advocate intimate, all the griefs and sorrows of the suffering children of God are noticed, and much regarded in the estimation of Him that sitteth on the throne: "Shall not God avenge his own elect, that cry unto him day and night?" Assured of this, we are taught to be confident, to rejoice in the midst of our sorrows, and to let the voice of praise be heard at all times. We are taught to trust in that divine keeping which shall preserve us, both from our outward enemies, and also from that internal foe, which, left to itself, would cause our feet to fall, and overwhelm our souls in death. Thus, through the divine preservation, his people shall endure to the end, and walk in the light of the Lamb, when he shall appear in his glory. Dr. Gill tells us, that some of the Jewish writers understood this last verse of Paradise. But perhaps more correctly we should consider the passage as denoting the fulfilment of that promise of our Lord to his Church, that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her to cut her off completely from the land of the living. The restored remnants too in the flesh are written among the living in Jerusalem, and possess the land of promise for ever on the new earth.

PSALM LVII.

1. **BE** gracious to me, O Elohim, be gracious to me,
For my soul hath taken shelter in thee.

Even under the shadow of thy wings will I take shelter,
Till the calamity * be overpassed.

2 I call upon Elohim, Most High,
Upon El who is accomplishing his work in me.

3 He shall send from heaven and save me,
Bringing to reproach those that pant for my life :^a
Elohim will send forth his kindness and his truth.

4 My soul is in the midst of lions ;
I lay down among children of men who are flaming fire.^b

Their teeth are spears and arrows,
And their tongue a sharp sword.

5 Exalt thyself above the heavens, O Elohim,
Thy glory over all the earth.

6 They prepared a net for my feet,
They digged a pit^c before me for my life :
In the midst of this pit are they fallen.

7 O Elohim, my heart is ready,
My heart is ready, I will sing and chant.

8 Awake my glory, awake ;
With psaltery and harp let me early awake.^d

9 I will praise thee among the peoples ;
I will chant to thee, O Lord, among the nations.

10 For thy tender love is great, even to the heavens,
And thy truth unto the skies.

11 Exalt thyself above the heavens, O Elohim,
Thy glory over all the earth.

* חַסְדִּי This is the same word, rendered in a former Psalm *cupidity* ; and the Septuagint here render "*sin*"—"Until sin pass away."—"Symmachus explains it in Psalm lv. 12, by *ἐνρηπεία*, *insulting injury*." Simon from Schultens has, I think, given the true meaning. "*חַסְדִּי barathrum*"—"est *desiderium* idque *pravum*. v. c. *cupiditas devorandi*"—"cupiditas di-

citur *profundum quid, barathrum*, quod expleri non potest."

^a I follow the emendation of Horsley, who removes נַפְשִׁי from the fourth verse to this line.

^b Or, "breathing flames."

^c Or, "a hollow place." See PARK-HURST.

^d Or, "wake the morning."

EXPOSITION.

The connexion and subject matter of this Psalm also, guide us to interpret it of that affliction of the church, which will only terminate in the appearing of the kingdom of Christ in the latter days. The 5th and 11th verses, which contain a kind of chorus, evidently anticipate this event: "Exalt thyself above the heavens, O God, thy glory over all the earth."

The Advocate speaks in the character of those for whom he prays; and is at once our mediator, and our instructor in prayer. He expresses on our behalf confidence in the protection of God, while the insatiate malice of the enemy shall be devouring his people. He looks to the **MOST HIGH** to finish his work in all the members of his mystical body. He anticipates the glorious day, when his church shall realize all the pledged kindness of God, and see her adversaries brought to shame.

The Psalm points out two periods of injury, that Christ should suffer in his people, exactly similar to what we have noticed in the LVth Psalm; the one of outward violence, verse 4th, "my soul or life is among lions," &c.—the other, of secret treachery, "they have prepared a net for my feet," &c. But "the adversary is taken in his own subtlety." "In the midst of this pit are they fallen;" and this is evidently the *final* struggle.

For the rest, praise, perpetual praise, is anticipated—praise among all peoples and nations. This is none other than the song of the heavenly harpers, Rev. xv. 1, who are also anticipating what shall follow the seven last plagues: "They sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints, "or nations!" Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

PSALM LVIII.

- 1 Is it in earnest, ye mighty, that you talk of righteousness?
Give ye sentence uprightly, O sons of men!
- 2 Nay; in your heart you are framing wickedness,
Your hands weigh out violence on the earth.
- 3 The wicked were alienated from the womb,
The speakers of falsehood have gone astray from the birth.
- 4 Their venom is like the venom of the serpent,
They are as the deaf adder that shutteth its ear;
- 5 That will not listen to the sound of incantations,^e
To the charm of the skilful enchanter.
- 6 Elohim hath broken their teeth in their mouths,
Jehovah hath destroyed the grinders of the young lions.
- 7 They dissolve, they glide away like water:
As his arrows to him that bends the bow, so are they dispersed.^f
- 8 As the blighted ear that vanishes away,^g
As the abortion that sees not the sun.

^e "To the sound of muttered charms [of one] combining combinations with skill, or, combining from the wise one, i. e. according to the rules of the adept." HORSLEY.

^f Or, transposing כִּמּוֹ and חֲזִין—
"Like his arrow they take fire." מִלֵּל
ex significatione rad. Arab. مَلْ
ustus est. Horsley renders the three
lines thus:

They shall melt away like water which is in continual flow:
He shall level his arrows against them,
And like *+*+* they shall split in pieces.

He conceives some word to be lost in the Hebrew text. Perhaps לִמּוֹ יִרְדָּךְ may mean, "He fills his bow with them." Compare Ps. cxviii. 10.

^g Or, "goes off." "תִּמְם *liquefactio, dissolutio sui ipsius.*" SIM. Lex.

But under the meaning of תִּמְם we find not only the meaning of *liquefactio*, but *capere rem opesve paulatim, partem post partem*. Hence it signifies *tribute* so gathered; and in this very difficult passage it may possibly signify the gathering of the ears of corn one by one, a method of harvest still practised in the East. The same figure of destruction is used in the book of Job. What שְׂבִלֹל signifies is uncertain; our translators make it a *snail*; Bishop Horsley, *wax*. שְׂבִלִים however, signifies *ears of corn*. "Like the ears of corn their gathering goes on;" so speedily, as quick as the gatherer's hand returns from the basket: rather, a blighted ear so quickly dispersed into the atmosphere.

- 9 Sooner than your vessels can feel the 'blazing' thorn,
The hot blast shall consume them, as well the green as the
dry.^h
- 10 The Just One shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance,
His feet shall be drenched in the blood of that Wicked.
- 11 And man shall say, Truly there is a fruit to the Just One,
Truly there is a God that judgeth the earth.

^h Lowth renders "Antequam ollæ
vestræ spinam sentiant, tam vivam
quam aridam, tempestas eos auferet."
שער or סער no doubt expresses
the action of the hot wind of the de-
sert. Compare the Arab. سحر—v.

ezarsit, ventus alicujus venenatus.
Perhaps we should render,
Sooner that your vessels can feel the blazing
thorn,
ⁱ Or the fiery-blast destroy them, as well the
green as the dry.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm begins with an expostulation with the judges and rulers of the earth; while they pretend justice and judgment in their decisions, it charges them with designed wickedness: the scales of justice weighed out violence. We shall not fail to discover here, that the persecuting magistrates are the subject of this rebuke. And not only the Pagan rulers who crucified the "Lord of Glory" and put to death his immediate followers; but more especially the nominally Christian magistrates and sovereigns, who at the instigation of "the wicked one," or "man of sin," under the disguise of righteousness and zeal for the purity of religion, have perverted the ordinances of justice and government to "wear out the saints of the Most High," during the long period of the reign of Antichrist.

In this view the application of the 3d, 4th, and 5th verses is very significant. They possessed, indeed, the preaching of the Gospel and the means of grace, that powerful charm which had so often disarmed mankind of the innate venom of sin, and had, as it were, changed their very nature. But these, like the deaf adder,ⁱ were not to be soothed or won by the art or music of the enchanter. The reason is pointed out: these liars and wicked ones, though they bore

ⁱ A kind of serpent, said to be the asp.

the form of religion, had ever been destitute of the regeneration of the Spirit: corrupt human nature, a serpent that could not be charmed, had grown and expanded in them uncorrected, unsubdued.

The members of the Antichristian faction, as many Scriptures testify, are not to be wrought upon by the preaching of the Gospel; but "that the wicked one" is only to be consumed by the breath of the Lord when he appears in judgment, and to be destroyed with the brightness of his coming.

We have accordingly a description of the destruction of the Antichristian enemy in the four next verses, which the reader will find to correspond with all the other denunciations of that dreadful judgment in Scripture. It is a day "that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."^k

The triumph of the "Just One" over the beast and the false prophet, and the subsequent manifestation of his kingdom, cannot be lost sight of in the conclusion of the Psalm. "Some one just person, and some one wicked person opposed to him," as Bishop Horsley observes, "is alluded to." And the figure of the bloody victor must remind us of Him whom the Prophet saw "coming from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah;"¹ and of "the great wine-press of the wrath of God (mentioned Rev. xiv. 20) which was trodden without the city, and the blood came out of the wine-press, even to the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

^k Malachi iv. 1.

¹ Isaiah lxiii. 1.

PSALM LIX.

1 DELIVER me from mine enemies, O Elohim ;
Set me on high from them that rise up against me.

2 Deliver me from the workers of vanity,
Save me from the men of blood.

3 For see, they lie in wait for my life,
The mighty assemble against me.

4 Not for my disobedience, and not for my sin, O Jehovah,
Without a fault in me they run and make ready.

5 Arise at my call and look ; for thou art Jehovah,
Elohim Sabaoth, Elohim of Israel.

Awake to visit all the nations,
Thou wilt shew no favor to all the revolters to vanity."^m

SELAH.

6 They will return at evening, growl like a dog,
And will surround the city.

7 Lo, they will swell up their mouths,"
Swords are in their lips ;
For who hath heard ?

8 And thou, O Jehovah, laughest at them,
Thou holdest all the nations in derision.

9 My strength,^o for thee I watch ;
For Elohim is my defence.

10 My Elohim, who loveth me, will prevent me ;
He will cause me to look in triumph on my foes.

^m Or, "perfidious idolators."

ⁿ "They speak great swelling words of vanity."

^o Or, with our translators, if we retain the reading of the text, "' Because' of his strength."

- 11 Thou wilt not slay them 'with the sword,' lest my people forget ;
 Thou wilt disquiet them in thy might, and subdue them.
- O Lord, our shield, 'for' the sin of their mouth,
 12 'For' the word of their lips shall they also be taken in their pride.

- While they were uttering swearing and falsehood,
 13 He consumed them in wrath, he consumed them till they were not :

And 'men' knew that Elohim reigned
 In Jacob, unto the ends of the earth.

SELAH.

- 14 And they will return at even and growl like a dog,
 And they will surround the city.
- 15 They will prow! about for food ;
 When they cannot be satisfied, then will they set up a howl.
- 16 But I will celebrate thy might,
 I will sing in the morning thy tender love.
- For thou hast been my defence,
 A refuge in the day of my distress.
- 17 O my strength, thee will I laud !
 For Elohim is my defence—the Elohim who hath loved me.^p

^p " The God who bears me tender love." HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

"When I consider," says Bishop Horsley in his notes on this Psalm, "that the enemies against whom the Psalmist invokes the Divine aid, are described in the 2d verse under the general characters of, 'dealers in iniquity,' and 'men of blood;' that is, idolaters and persecutors; I have no doubt, that the poem is entirely mystic; that the Psalmist personates Messiah, or the persecuted church."

Messiah, I would say, is pleading the cause of his af-

flicted church, suffering under some unprovoked attack (ver. 4th) of its adversaries, in the latter days. These enemies are distinguished (ver. 5th) as "all the heathen," and as "revolters to vanity," or "idolatry:" by which I think are pointed out the nations of the great apostacy, once Christians, but now relapsed into gentilism and idolatry. I had thought, as I noticed in my former edition, that they were "the gentiles, that tread under foot the mystic city for forty and two months." I now adopt the opinion that the literal Jerusalem after her restoration is particularly meant: the meaning of their returning at evening, &c. is, that these same apostates will, in the close of this dispensation, return again to attack the city of Jerusalem, like a cry of hungry and voracious hounds, and compass her about; but will be disappointed of their prey, and not be enabled like their Pagan forefathers to lay her level with the dust, and her children within her. The divine poet compares them to the hungry dogs, which nightly prowls about the eastern cities in immense numbers in quest of food.

Many travellers speak of these intruders, and the noise of their nocturnal visits; for it appears, these dogs, which belong to no one, retire into some secret retreat during the daytime, and at night only traverse the streets for food. They are in fact, as some one says, the scavengers of the towns of the East. But perhaps a pack of hounds, as usually engaged in hunting down their prey, is the figure here employed.

Their fate is described in the 11th verse, and it will be found to correspond with the doom constantly predicted to the last enemies of the Gospel. They fall not by the sword of man, or after the common judgments that had visited the children of men; but are dispersed, panic struck and subdued by the immediate interference of the Almighty, that is to say, in the day of Christ's appearing.—"For the sin of their mouth, for the word of their lips, they are also taken in their pride." Read the description of their discomfiture in the last siege of Jerusalem in Isaiah and Zechariah.

Mistaking the force of the word we render *disperse*,

many expositors have referred this to the judgment of the Jews; but it cannot relate to them, because in the next verse, they are said to be "consumed till they are not." And, moreover, the issue of the judgment is the manifestation of Christ's universal kingdom—God reigning in Jacob, and unto the ends of the earth. The five last verses, the reader will perceive, are only a repetition, with some variations.

PSALM LX.

1 O ELOHIM, thou hast rejected us, thou hast afflicted us,^a
Thou hast been angry, O return to us again!

2 Thou hast shaken the earth, and broken it;^b
Repair its breaches, for it bendeth.^c

3 Thou hast made thy people to see hard things,
Thou hast caused them to drink the wine of giddiness.

4 Thou hast made them that fear thee to flee,
To precipitate themselves in flight, before the tyrant.^d

SELAH.

5 That thy beloved may be delivered,
Save with thy right hand, and hear me.

6 God hath spoken from his sanctuary.

^a Literally, "Thou hast burst forth with violence upon us."

^b פָּצַע *fregit, sine partium separatione.*

^c נָחַךְ to decline from a perpendicular, to bow or lean as a wall. Psalm lxii. 4.

^d Bishop Horsley has only left a few notes upon this Psalm: he remarks on the verse before us, "For קָשָׁת the LXX. and Jerome, the Syriac and Symmachus, had קָשֶׁת

which may seem to give an easy sense:

'To which they may repair from the danger of the bow.'—Simon remarks upon this passage, "Forti קָשָׁת rectus vertitur *contumax, refractorius qui flecti nequit*, quoad sensum, hostis implacabilis. a rad Arab. קָשָׁת *qasat* rectus fuit sine ulla curvatura, *rigidus fuit*; unde diversu flectu tam *justus quam injustus* deduci potuit, &c." "Rigid adversary."

With joy will I portion out Sechem,
And will measure the valley of Succoth.

7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine ;
And Ephraim is the support of my head ;^a
Judah is my staff :

8 Moab is the vessel for my washing ;
To Edom will I cast my sandal ;
For me, Philistia, raise the shout of joy.

9 Who will conduct me to the strong city,^{*}
Who will lead me unto Edom ?

10 Is it not thou, O Elohim ? Thou hadst rejected us,
And wouldest not go forth with our hosts !

11 Vouchsafe us deliverance from distress,
For vain is the help of man.

12 With Elohim we shall do great things,
And it is he that shall tread down our enemies.

^a מַעוֹן ראשי Hare makes this term to signify a helmet, and renders מַדְחָקִי *hasta mea*. If helmet were correct, I should conjecture it means a helmet in which the lots were shaken in order to portion out the country ; and מַדְחָקִי will mean the rod or staff with which it was measured.

^{*} Or, the city of Egypt : מִצְרַיִם is a name of Egypt, Isaiah xix. 6—Arab.

مصر Syr. مِצْرَ — מִצְרַיִם how-

ever, may signify a fortified town. Compare Isaiah xviii. In the parallel place Ps. cviii. we read מִבְצָר the city of the fortress. Perhaps it might be,

Who is conducting me to the city girt in siege ?
Who hath led me to Edom ?

Or rather "Bozrah, the city of the vintage," symbolically applied perhaps. Compare Isaiah xxxiv. and lxiii. 1—6.

EXPOSITION.

The restoration of Israel to the land of promise is clearly the subject of this Psalm. The restoration of Israel is unquestionably closely connected with the second advent of Jesus Christ ; and although we cannot, from the light now afforded, as has been already several times remarked, point out exactly its connexion with the 'other grand events of that period—the first resurrection,—the gathering together of the elect,—and the establishment of the glorious kingdom

of Christ; yet we can plainly discern that the restoration of Israel is one of the events of that era, and forms a link in the chain of those wonderful providences that wind up the affairs of fallen man upon earth, and bring on the final catastrophe and overthrow of the kingdom of darkness.

In the 1st verse we have the prayer of the rejected people, accepting the punishment of their iniquity, and asking for divine assistance. The whole earth is seen to be violently convulsed (ver. 2), and the afflicted people of God are almost driven to despair: so awful, at first, are the signs of the times! (ver. 3.) This is agreeable to the universal language of prophecy, when it predicts the final deliverance of Israel in particular, and of the church in general—events, as we have observed, very closely connected together, though the connexion may not yet fully appear: “And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.”^y

The fourth verse I believe to depict the last attack of the foe on the beloved city. Compare Psalm cvii. 39, &c. and Zech. xiv.—“Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.”

And we cannot but compare our Lord's own words,^z “And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity: the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the

^y Daniel xii. 1.

^z Luke xxi. 24, &c.

earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”—“And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”^b

We are next presented with a picture of Israel being finally restored to their land; and in this all the children of God—the children of the resurrection with the redeemed world, have a near and most important interest. St. Paul says, that “the receiving of the outcasts of Israel” will be “life from the dead;” and Daniel was told, as recorded in the passage just quoted, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake”—“and they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.”

In the Psalm before us, as we have noticed, we are called to view the tribes of the Lord returning. The Almighty gives at length the expected order from his holy place. Immediately you see the exulting Israelite taking possession of all the different portions of the promised land: Shechem and Succoth, Gilead and Manasseh; the land of Ephraim and Judah principally. Moab, Edom, and Philistia, their former rebellious and troublesome dependencies, are glad to submit, and, as it were, ready to perform the offices of domestic servants, and to welcome their returning masters with shouts of joy.

The four last verses contain an acknowledgement that no power of man, but the aid of the Almighty himself, who had once rejected Israel, can accomplish this mighty deliverance for his afflicted people. “And I will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, nor by horses, nor by horsemen.”^c And if the reader will turn to the xxxivth of Isaiah, with the beginning of the lxiii^d chapter, and the last chapter of Ze-

^b Matt. xxiv. 31.

^c Hosea i. 7.

chariah, he will, perhaps, think with me that Edom and Bozrah, in the fifth verse, have a symbolical meaning, and can only be applied to the spiritual Edom, and to the treading of the wine press of the wrath of Almighty God.

PSALM LXI.

- 1 HEAR my cry, O Elohim,
 Attend to my prayer :
 2 From the extremity of the earth will I call to thee,
 In the fainting of my heart.
- O guide me to the rock that riseth above me !^d
- 3 Surely thou hast been my shelter,
 A tower of strength before the enemy.
- 4 I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever,
 And take shelter in the covert of thy wings.
- SELAH.
- 5 For thou, O Elohim, hast heard my vows,
 Thou hast given an heritage to them that fear thy name.^e
- 6 Days upon days wilt thou add unto the king,
 His years as from generation to generation.
- 7 He shall sit eternally in the presence of Elohim,
 Loving kindness and truth from 'Jehovah' shall crown him.^f
- 8 So will I praise thy name for ever,
 Discharging my vows from day to day.

^d Some, adopting a various reading, render :

Hear my cry, O God, attend to my prayer :
 From the extremity of the earth I call unto thee.
 When my heart is overwhelmed in distress,
 Raise thou me up and guide me.

^e Or, " Given to me for an heritage them that fear thy name."

^f For מֵן Houbigant and Bishop Lowth would read מִיְהוָה

EXPOSITION.

Guided by the connexion in which we find this Psalm, I am led to consider the church, or rather her great Advocate on her behalf, as the supplicant in this sacred song. In a season of distress he cries unto God, and is heard; and at length he glories in the deliverance vouchsafed to his prayers. The danger anticipated is extreme; which seems to point out the afflictions of the church in the last days, of which so many of the former Psalms have treated. And the deliverance obtained is the exaltation and prolonged reign of her KING. This again plainly connects the subject with the promised kingdom of Christ. For this the church in every age is considered in Scripture as waiting, anticipating with longing expectation, its appearing. "We are saved in hope," as the Apostle tells us, and "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."

Such is the general view of the subject of this Psalm. A question indeed may arise, whether, from the expression "the extremity of the earth," we may not understand some particular portion of the chosen remnant to be pointed out as participating in the general deliverance. This is the notion I have been led to form, by a comparison of the two following passages: "When thus it shall be in the midst of the land, among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive-tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the RIGHTEOUS." Isaiah xxiv. 13, &c. So chap. xlii. 10. "Sing unto the Lord a new song, his praise from the *end of the earth*, ye that go down to the sea and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof."

PSALM LXII.

1 TRULY my soul reposeth upon Elohim,
From him is my help :

2 Truly he is my rock and my help, my fortress ;
I shall not be shaken.

‘SELAH.’^g

3 How long will ye rush^h against a MAN—would ye batter him,
all of you ?ⁱ

4 Like a declining wall, a shaken fence.^k
Even from his pre-eminence, they will consult to push him
down, they love a lie ;
With their mouths they bless, and in their hearts they
curse.

SELAH.

5 But, my soul, repose thou only on God,
For my hope is from him.

6 Truly he is my rock and my help, my fortress ;
I shall not be moved.

7 In Elohim is my help and my glory, my strong rock ;
My shelter is in Elohim.

8 Trust in him at all times, ye people ; pour out your hearts
before him :
Elohim is our shelter.

SELAH.

9 Truly the sons of men are a delusive vapour !
The sons of the great, a deception !
They mount up in the balances,
A vapour altogether.

^g Bishop Horsley thinks the conjecture of Houbigant to be probable, that רבה is written by mistake for סלה

^h רתותתו See Parkhurst. Simon, from the Arabic, would give it

the sense of “raising a clamour against.”

ⁱ “Malim active תרש-חו. *condetis scribere.*” SIMON.

^k “Impulsa,” literally, “a fence that has had a shove.” HORSLEY.

10 Trust not in oppression, and in rapine vainly imagine not wealth :

When it increases, set not your heart upon it.

11 Once hath Elohim spoken, twice have I heard this,

That power belongeth to Elohim,

12 And thine, O Lord, is loving kindness.

When thou wilt requite to each according to his work.¹

¹ Or, "as his work shall be."

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm, also, is prepared for the church during the reign of successful wickedness, while "the Gentiles rage, and the nations imagine a vain thing;" to cast off the yoke of the Gospel, and to oppose the approaching reign of the anointed King. In the two first verses the church encourages herself in the Lord her God. Or, rather, her great Advocate is thus leading on her song of praise.

The 3d and 4th verses describe these promoters of false doctrine, who "make and love a lie," as plotting against the Son of Man, and aiming at the overthrow of his religion. These, we are told again, are not open enemies: "they bless with their mouths:" they clearly belong to the great apostacy of these latter days.

In the four next verses the risen Saviour expresses his confidence in the divine help on behalf of the church, and calls upon all her members to hold fast the same confidence.

In the 9th verse we have a striking picture of the futility of the attempt of the church's enemies, against the help vouchsafed to her.

These enemies are next admonished—and the admonition points out another feature of Antichrist, "*supposing that gain is godliness.*" These are they "that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches:" thus we read in the lamentation over the ruin of apostate Christendom: "Alas, alas, that great city, that was

clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones and pearls ! for in one hour so great riches is come to nought.”^m

This judgment of the proud apostates will manifest to all, the power of the Almighty. It will manifest also his tender love to the objects of that love, who had heretofore groaned under oppression and the scornful reproof of the proud. Then too, it will be manifested that riches which embolden the careless worldling in his forgetfulness of God, “profit not in the day of wrath;” when each individual, whatever be his rank or station, who is found out of the covenant of mercy, must be judged without respect of persons according to his works, and their injurious treatment of his people fully avenged at last.

^m Revelation xviii. 16, &c.

PSALM LXIII.

- 1 O ELOHIM, thou art my El, early will I seek thee ;
My soul hath thirsted for thee, my flesh hath languished for thee.
- ^aLike the ground parched, and gasping for want of water ;
- 2 So, I have looked for thee in the sanctuary, to see thy might and thy glory.
- 3 Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee :
- 4 So will I bless thee while I live, and lift up my hands in thy name.
- 5 Thou wilt satisfy my soul as with fatness and richness,
Therefore my mouth shall praise thee with rejoicing lips.
- 6 Have I not remembered thee on my bed ?
And meditated on thee in the night watches ?

^a The Syriac and two MSS. have כָּאֵרֶץ

- 7 For thou wast a help to me,
Therefore I would rejoice in the shadow of thy wings.
- 8 My soul hath clinged close to thee,
'And' thy right hand will support me.^o
- 9 And these seek after my soul in vain,
They shall go to the 'regions' below the earth.
- 10 They that would pour it out^p on the edge of the sword,
They shall become a portion for jackals.^q
- 11 But the king shall rejoice in Elohim,
Every one shall exult that hath sworn by him,
For the mouth of the speakers of falsehood shall be closed.^r

^o Or, "thy right hand has ever supported me."

^p "They would shed it;" i. e. my life: for נפש which is of the doubtful gender, is the antecedent of the

masculine suffix יָדָיו." HORSLEY.

^q See Parkhurst.

^r "The advocates of the false religions, and the opposers of the truth." HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm also, I conceive, is to be applied to the church in her retreat into the wilderness from the face of the Dragon, "where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three-score days."^s As St. Peter speaks, she was looking for and hastening unto the day of the Lord. The prayer upon her lips was, Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come. The imagery borrowed from the parched land of the desert gasping for rain, may well represent the hard condition of the believers in the times that are past, when there was a "famine of the word of God," and the fountain of the living waters seemed diverted from the church by the propagators of false doctrine.

Still, however, God had engaged to nourish his church in this wilderness, and she has ever found the promise true. In the worst of times, when all was desolation around, there has ever been a remnant, nurtured in secret, who remem-

^s Revelation xii. 6.

bered "God on their beds, and thought on him in the night-watches." No fruitful showers fell upon the apostate churches in which they lived, but they cleaved unto God in private, and his right hand supported them.

At length the season of deliverance arrives: the enemies of the church meet with their long-predicted doom. Her King appears "in the day of the gladness of his heart." All his faithful people, those who have entered into his covenant and his oath, partake of the joy: there is a call to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The mouth of the false prophet is closed: and "all liars have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone."

PSALM LXIV.

1 HEAR my voice, O Elohim, in my prayer,^t

Preserve my life from the fear of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked,

From the raging multitude of the workers of vanity.^u

3 They have sharpened their tongue like a sword,

They have levelled their arrow, the word of bitterness.

4 To shoot the perfect man^x from secret places,

Suddenly they hit him while they are not seen.

5 They will contrive together the evil report,^y

They plan to spread the snares:

They say, Who seeth them?

6 They dissemble iniquity;

^t "My secret prayer."—"I think the word שֵׁכֶר when it signifies prayer, denotes private prayer, as distinct from public." HORSLEY.

^u "Promoters of idolatry." Idem.

^x תָּם in this place, as in Gen. xxv. 27, may perhaps denote "artless simplicity," or soundness in the faith.

^y רָצוּק ligavit; hence to strengthen, to confirm by mutual assertion.

They will accomplish fraud after fraud,
And each one is close and deep of heart.^a

7 But Elohim will shoot an arrow at them,
Suddenly shall be their wounds !

8 They shall fall by their own tongue ;^a
All that see them shall flee away ;

9 And all mankind shall fear,
And shall declare it to be the work of Elohim,
For they shall perceive it to be his doing.

10 The JUST ONE shall rejoice in Jehovah,
And all the upright in heart shall take shelter in him and exult.

^a Bishop Horsley understands—
“ Who doth see ? Who sees the best
mode of proceeding ? Let him bring
forward his plans.”

^a “ For they shall cause their own
tongue to blunder upon themselves.”
HORSLEY.

“ They have finished searching a search,
And each one is close and deep of heart.”

EXPOSITION.

Though some, with Bishop Horsley, have applied this Psalm to Christ amidst his personal conflicts with the Jews in the days of his flesh, I think there are many reasons to consider it rather as part of the intercession of our great Advocate respecting his mystical body, that part of it, at least, which he had left still militant on earth. “ Workers of vanity,” or “ makers of false objects of worship,” generally distinguishes the followers of ANTICHRIST. And the 3d and three following verses will be found to characterise the calumniators of the truth, and the artful impostors of the latter times. They agree well with the description of him who “ was to speak great words against the MOST HIGH ;” “ and of him, too, perhaps,” who was “ through his policy to make craft to prosper in his hands.”^b It answers, also, to the description in the New Testament of the supporters of this same apostacy ; “ Speaking lies in hypocrisy,” “ having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”—“ But

^b Daniel vii. 25.

there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and shall bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”^c

Both the description and the predicted fate of these enemies of Messiah, agree better, I think, with the adversaries whom he is to destroy at his second advent, than with his personal contest with the Jews, and with their judgment as a nation, which followed not long afterwards.

“Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.”^d But especially the consequences which follow this judgment on the enemies of Messiah, demonstrate the Psalm, like the rest with which we find it in connexion, to anticipate the second coming of Jesus Christ. All mankind fear and acknowledge the hand of God—the **JUST ONE**—the King of Saints—and all his faithful followers relying on him, rejoice and enter on their long-predicted triumph.

^c 2 Peter ii. 1, &c.

^d Jude 14, &c.

PSALM LXV.

- 1 PRAISE waiteth^e on thee, O Elohim, in Zion,
And unto thee shall the vow be performed.
- 2 O thou that hearest prayer, even unto thee
All flesh shall come.
- 3 The accounts of iniquities^f prevailed against me :^g
As for our transgressions thou wilt cover them.
- 4 Most blessed is he whom thou shalt choose and have near to
thee,
That he should abide in thy courts :
- He shall be filled with good from thine house,
From thy holy dwelling.
- 5 By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us,
O Elohim of our salvation.
'Thou shalt be' the confidence of all the ends of the earth,
And of the distant seas ;^h
- 6 Disposing the mountains by thy strength,
Being girt with power ;
- 7 Stilling the raging of the waters, the raging of their waves,
Asⁱ the tumult of the nations.
- 8 They that dwell in the distant regions shall revere thy signs,
The outgoings of the evening and morning shall rejoice.
- 9^k Thou hast visited the earth, and made it teem with plenty,^l
Greatly hast thou enriched it.

^e See Parkhurst. "Resteth:" literally, "Upon thee, O God, is the repose of praise." HORSLEY. It might be,

To thee praise was silent in Zion,
Yet to thee shall the vow be paid.

^f דְּבָרֵי עֲוֹנוֹת "דְּבָרֵי" is a technical term of mercantile arithmetic." HORSLEY.

^g "Were strong against me."

^h "Them that are far beyond the sea." HORSLEY.

ⁱ NOLDIUS.

^k Many alterations of the text are proposed by most interpreters in their rendering of these two verses. The above assumes the text to be right.

^l וַיַּשְׂבֵּר et abundare fecisti vel abundantem reddidisti eam, vel potasti, rigasti eam.

Elohim hath divided^m the fulness of the waters, thou dispo-
 their produce."

10 When thus thou hast disposed her,^o

Her furrows dost thou moisten, settling down her ridges with
 showers :

Thou dost soften^p her, thou dost bless her springing.

11 Thou hast encircled the year with thy bounty,
 And thy chariot wheels drop fatness.

12 They drop beauties on the plain,
 And the hills are girt with joy.

13 The pastures are clothed with flocks,
 And the vallies are covered with corn ;
 They utter a sound of joy, they even sing.

^m " Divided into streams."

ⁿ Or their abundance, namely, of
 the waters. The fish, &c. which the
 waters brought forth abundantly.

^o " Established," " restored," " dis-

posed," or " set in order"—her, viz.
 the earth.

^p Or, " dissolve her springing or
 shooting crops."

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm, I think, affords evidently a prophetic view of the prosperity of the church in the latter days, when the kingdom of God shall fully come, and "the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah shall cover the earth as the waters do the sea." In the first verse we are told that the song of praise is ready to be offered in Zion—that one has entered into the sacred courts to perform his vows. This can be none other than the great High Priest of our profession, the Lord of Hosts of the former Psalm—and the office in which he is engaged marks some new deliverance obtained for his church. What this deliverance is, we collect from the expressions used. His prayers and intercessions are heard. All flesh is coming to the God that hath heard his prayer. We see then the place where this Psalm falls in the series of prophecy. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be es-

tablished in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.”^q

The church is considered as having long been in an afflicted state, because of her sins. Her Advocate calls them his own; and at length his intercessions prevail: they are covered.

The 4th verse is, I think, to be considered as the congratulatory praises of the church for the acceptance and exaltation of her Advocate and Surety. Jesus is called and chosen to be the High Priest of his people—he “abides for ever” “a minister of the true tabernacle, which God has pitched and not man”—“He ever liveth to make intercession for us”—and there he prevails, and “receives gifts for men,” and “out of his fulness,”—from his loaded hands, as it were, “all we receive grace for grace.”

“By terrible things in righteousness hast thou answered us:” that is, the answer to the church’s prayer was first manifested by the tremendous display of judgment and justice that overwhelmed her oppressors and corrupters; agreeably to the usual predictions of the coming of Christ’s kingdom in the last days.

That these fearful judgments are the last outpourings of wrath, we infer again from their issue. The whole surviving race of mankind are subdued and gathered into the kingdom. The Saviour God, and he alone, is now become the confidence or the object of religious trust to all the inhabitants of the terraqueous globe.

“Disposing the mountains, &c.” that is, establishing the new order of things, with irresistible might, creating new heavens and a new earth; after he has arrested and stilled for ever the tumultuous uproar of his adversaries.

The 8th verse again describes the change as universal. The utmost regions of the earth, from the rising to the setting sun, perceive and acknowledge, in awful submission, the signs that now appear, and all nations welcome with shouts of joy the promised kingdom: “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.”^r

^q Isaiah ii. 2.

^r Matthew xxiv. 27.

From the 9th verse to the end of the Psalm we have a beautiful display of the blessings of the reign of the Messiah. If the language be merely figurative, as some suppose, the metaphors are taken from what we know of the bounties of Providence now. Genial showers, and fruitful seasons, and a landscape teeming with plenty, in all the various productions of the hill and dale, are depicted before us. God visits the earth: the curse is removed from the land which the Lord had cursed. The waters of the vast and barren ocean are divided into fructifying streams, conveying their multitudinous offspring of fish into every valley. Thus the earth is watered in all directions. The arid desert disappears, the "waste howling wilderness" is no more—the wonted showers are sent in their proper season, and the blessing of the Lord is on all the productions of the earth. The whole year is encircled with perpetual bounties, and every revolution of day and night, or of the revolving seasons, seems to bear around the gracious Giver of all good things, dropping wherever he passes, on hill or valley, the rich productions of nature, and filling every heart with joy and gladness.

Such is the beautiful scene to be displayed in the "golden age,"^s when it shall return. With respect to the mortal inhabitants of this lower earth, it will, I doubt not, be literally fulfilled, and may perhaps be considered as symbolical of the happier lot of the children of the resurrection. At least such will be the happy condition of the lower world, over which, as sharers of their Master's throne, they will preside, and reign as kings and priests to God and the Lamb.

^s Compare Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

PSALM LXVI.

- 1 RAISE the shout of joy to Elohim,
All the earth.
- 2 Sing the glory of his name,
Set forth the glory of his praise.
- 3 Say ye to Elohim, How awful is thy work!
Through thy great strength thy enemies fail before thee. ¹
- 4 All the earth doth worship thee;
Ay, they praise thee—they praise thy name.
SELAH.
- 5 Come and behold the works of Elohim;
Awful is his dealing with the children of men.
- 6 He hath turned the sea into dry land,
They pass over the flood on foot:
There we rejoice in him.
- 7 He ruleth in his might for ever;
His eyes are fixed on the nations;
The rebels cannot exalt themselves.
SELAH.
- 8 Bless our Elohim, O ye nations,
And make the sound of his praise to be heard;
- 9 Who hath appointed our soul unto life,
And hath not suffered our foot to slip.
- 10 Truly thou hast tried us, O Elohim;
Thou hast proved us like as silver is proved.
- 11 Thou broughtest us into the toil,
Thou placedst the restraint ^u upon our loins.

¹ See Parkhurst. "Be found liars in their former vaunts." suppose might be some part of the hunter's apparatus. Compare Arab.

^u מוֹעֲקָה we have reason to עֲקָ retinuit.

- 12 Thou sufferedst men to ride over our head ;
 We went through fire and water,
 But thou hast brought us out into a place of refreshing. ^v
- 13 I will go into thine house with offerings,
 I will discharge unto thee my vows,
- 14 Which my lips have uttered,
 And my mouth has spoken in my trouble.
- 15 I will offer to thee offerings of fat ' beasts ' with incense ;
 I will sacrifice rams, bullocks with goats.

SELAH.

- 16 Come ye, and listen, and I will rehearse,
 All ye that fear Elohim,
 What he hath done for me.
- 17 I called to him with my mouth,
 He was extolled on my tongue.
- 18 If I had regarded vanity in my heart,
 The Lord would not have heard me.
- 19 Verily, Elohim hath heard me,
 He hath hearkened to the voice of my prayer.
- 20 Blessed be Elohim,
 Who hath not turned away my prayer,
 Nor his loving-kindness from me.

^v For לְרוּחָהּ all the versions have לְרוּחָהּ.

EXPOSITION.

Many of the Jewish commentators refer this Psalm to the gathering of their nation in the latter days, and with them Bishop Horsley and other Christian expositors agree.

The four first verses are clearly a congratulatory song for that final overthrow of the enemies of the Gospel, which is followed by the spiritual subjection of the whole earth to the sceptre of the King of saints.

The three next verses call our attention to some particular operation of the divine hand in that age of wonders: and this particular operation seems to be, his hand stretched out to deliver his ancient people the Jews: "The sea is dried up, they pass the river on foot." And several passages of Scripture speak of the second exodus, as bearing, in its wonders, some resemblance to the former departure of Israel from the land of Egypt. Thus we read in Isaiah: * "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people that shall be left, from Assyria and Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea: and he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."—"And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod: and there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt."

"The rebels that cannot exalt themselves," are the Antichristian crew that perish in this last conflict on the mountains of Palestine: or perhaps the refractory Israelites of a subsequent Psalm.

The 8th and four following verses are spoken in the character of the *restored* Israelites: they seem to call upon all the world to unite with them in praising God for his favours vouchsafed unto them: they mention the great and sore afflictions which they had passed through, their trials and difficulties; but how at length they have been brought forth into a place of refreshment.

Now, other Scriptures speak of the restoration of Israel in a manner which leaves a strong impression upon our minds, that the greater part of the nation will be destroyed in the *refining process* of those judgments that are to gather them,

* Chap. xi. 11.

and that a remnant which is left, is alone the SEED counted to the Lord. The words of the prophetic Spirit in Zechariah^y are very remarkable: "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein: and I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; and they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

From the 13th to the end of the Psalm, we have the song of praise of the chosen remnant, expressive of their grateful acknowledgments for their wonderful deliverances. The sacrifices mentioned are by some understood as symbolical of a more spiritual worship, but from a comparison of other scriptures all may be literally applicable to the restored Jewish church upon earth, in the kingdom of the Lord Messiah.

^y Chap. xiii. 8, &c. Compare Zeph. iii. 12.

PSALM LXVII.

1 ELOHIM be gracious unto us, and bless us;
And cast the light of his countenance upon us.

SELAH.

2 —To make known thy way on the earth,
Thy salvation among all nations.

3 That the peoples may praise thee, O Elohim,
All the peoples praise thee.

4 That the peoples may rejoice and exult,
Because thou wilt govern the nations in righteousness,
And wilt comfort^z the peoples in the earth.

SELAH.

^z For compassionate or sympathize with.

- 5 The nations shall praise thee, O Elohim,
All the nations shall praise thee.
- 6 The earth shall give its increase ;
Elohim, our Elohim, shall bless us ;
- 7 Elohim shall bless us,
And all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

EXPOSITION.

“The ancient Jews apply this Psalm לעתיד לבא *to future time*, to the world to come, the times of the Messiah.”^a And, as Bishop Horsley remarks, it is prophetic of a general conversion of the world to the worship of God.

Jerusalem, enjoying her restored prosperity in the light of the divine countenance, feels it a call to spread the tidings of salvation, and, confident of the issue, anticipates the united chorus of all the nations of the earth.

This clearly predicts the glorious kingdom after the judgment has set, and dominion is given to the saints of the MOST HIGH. “The Jerusalem that now is,” after her rebuilding, will take the lead in this business. But “the Jerusalem which is above, that cometh down from God out of heaven, already has covered her as a cloud of glory, and made her the city of the great King, the place of the soles of his feet.” We know that the “receiving” of the Jews “will be life from the dead ;” but in what connexion or sequence we can yet but dimly discern.—“It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues ; and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them ; and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory ; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.”^b We may compare also the lxth chapter of this Prophet : “Arise, shine : for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For

^a See Dr. Gill.

^b Isaiah lxvi. 18, &c.

behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

This Psalm is one of those selected for our daily afternoon service. It can have no important application in this connection, but as it is prophetic of glorious scenes to come, which are the common hope of all the church of God.

PSALM LXVIII.

- 1 LET Elohim arise, his enemies be scattered;
And they that hate him, flee before him.
- 2 They shall be dispersed as smoke is dispersed:
As wax is melted before the fire,
The wicked shall perish from the presence of Elohim.
- 3 But the righteous shall rejoice,
They shall be glad at the presence of Elohim;
Aye, they shall exult with rejoicings:
- 4 "Sing ye Elohim, laud ye his name."

FIRST SEMI-CHORUS.

Prepare the way for him that rideth through the wilderness;
Jah is his name; rejoice therefore before him.^e

- 5 Father of the orphan, defender of the widows,
Elohim in his holy habitation.

- 6 Elohim is restoring the destitute to a home,
Bringing forth prisoners into scenes of plenty,^d
But the refractory^e remain on the dry rock.^f

^e Or, "In his name of Jah." Jah as distinct from Jehovah I consider as equivalent to "ὁ ἐρχόμενος" of the New Testament—He that shall, or should come.

^d "כְּשֶׁרֶת, loca omnibus rebus affluentia, proprie abundantiae **כֶּשֶׂר** abundavit." SIM. Lex.

^e Rebels, or revolvers.

^f Or, "glaring desert."

SECOND SEMI-CHORUS.

- 7 O Elohim, when thou wentest before thy people,
When thou marchedst through the desert,
- 8 The earth trembled: ay, the heavens dropped
At the presence of Elohim—Sinai itself,
At the presence of Elohim, the Elohim of Israel.
- 9 Thou didst scatter, O Elohim, a plentiful shower,
And established^g thy fainting heritage.
- 10 Thy food settled upon it,^h
Of thy goodness thou didst prepare for the afflicted.

FIRST SEMI-CHORUS.

- 11 Elohim, the Lord, hath given the word;
The proclaimersⁱ 'are' a numerous host.
- 12 "Kings of armies shall flee—shall flee!
And she that stayeth in the house shall divide the spoil.
- 13 Though ye are lying among the pots,^k
'Ye shall be' like the wings of a dove—covered with silver,
And her pinions with verdant gold.
- 14 When Shaddai scattereth kings,
Then shall she be white as the snow in Salmon."^l
- 15 The hill of Bashan 'is' the hill of Elohim,
The hill of Bashan 'is' a hill of swelling heights.¹
- 16 Why look ye enviously,^m ye swelling hills?
This is the hill which Elohim hath desired to dwell in;
Aye, Jehovah fixeth his dwelling here for ever.

^g Or, "restored."^h Some render it, "Thy living creatures were brought to them." But see Parkhurst in verbo.ⁱ המבשרות the women who, according to the ancient custom, announced the victory by singing congratulatory songs: the congratulatory song follows, I conceive, in the three next verses. Bishop Horsley observes, "The connexion and rendering of the 12th, 13th, and 14th verses are very

doubtful."

^k See Simon in שפת "Conf.

אשפור et Arab. اثف sustentavit, proprie sustentaculum olle et aheni nobis tripus Arabibus campestribus tres lapides fere aequales, quos (tripodis loco) componunt Arabes secnitæ, ut Hieronymus ait ad I Sam. ii. 5."

¹ Literally, "a hill of gibbosities," "a hill of lofty brows." HORSLEY.^m See Parkhurst. "For what would you contend?" HORSLEY.

- 17 Elohim ridethⁿ on amid myriads, thousands of thousands ;^o
The Lord is with them 'as in' Sinai, in the sanctuary.
- 18 Thou hadst ascended on high ; thou hadst led captive many
captives,
Thou hast received gifts for men ;^p
But shall the refractory be an habitation for Jah-Elohim ?^q
- 19 Blessed be the Lord from day to day ;
The El of our salvation will load us with benefits.^r
SELAH.
- 20 He that is our El is an El of victories,
And to Jehovah the Lord belong the issues of death.^s
- 21 Aye, Elohim will strike the head of his enemies,
The hairy scalp of him who goeth on still in his guilt.
- 22 I will turn 'him' back, hath the Lord said, from Bashan ;
I will turn 'him' back from the shores of the sea.
- 23 So that thou shalt plunge thy foot in blood,
As for the tongue of thy dogs, from the enemies has each his
portion.^t

SECOND SEMI-CHORUS.

- 24 "They saw thy processions, O Elohim ;"^u
Thy processions, my El, my King, to the Sanctuary.

ⁿ Reading רכב as a verb.

^o Or, according to another reading, "the thousands of the blessed." We may translate the passage thus :

God rideth on amid myriads,
A leader of happy 'followers' is the Lord among them :

Sinai is in the sanctuary.

^p "To bestow on man." Some render these lines,

Thou hast received gifts in man,
Ah ! the rebellious for a habitation of Jah Elohim.
But compare St. Paul, Eph. iv. 8, and verse 8 of this Psalm.

^q Or, "Aye, even the rebellious shall be an habitation," &c. With Houbigant I follow the Syriac in this place. סוררים אפסוברים. LXX. Non credentes. Vulg.

^r Or, "will bear the burden for us." The El of our salvation. Or, perhaps, "He, the enemy, will lay a burden upon us."

^s "And for death are the goings forth of the Lord Jehovah ; i.e. when Jehovah takes the field, deadly is the battle to his enemies." HORSLEY.—Some render it : "And to God we owe our escapes from death."

^t מנהן pars sive portio ejus. Psalm lxviii. 24, ejus versus difficillimi sensum hunc esse putaverim, ut incutias, sive jactes pedem tuum in sanguinem ; ad linguam canum tuorum quod attinet, ab hostibus portio ejus." SIMON.—Horsley transposes מאיבים "So that thy foot may be imbrued in the blood of enemies. And the tongue of thy dogs in the same."

^u They—our Fathers at the first Exodus, and on subsequent occasions.

^x "Thy manner is seen, O God." Literally, "thy goings."

- 25 The singers were first, behind the harpers ;
In the midst the virgins with timbrels :
- 26 They blessed Elohim in the congregations,
The Lord from the stock of Israel.^y
- 27 Then was Benjamin reduced small, their Ruler ;
The princes of Judah their defence,^z
The princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.

SECOND SEMI-CHORUS.

- 28 Thy Elohim has commanded thy strength ;
O Elohim, put forth thy might, this thou hast wrought for us.^a
- 29 Because of thy temple at Jerusalem,
Kings shall bring a present to thee.
- 30 He hath checked the beast of the reed,^b the assembly of the bulls,
With the calves of the nations, disturbing with their feet^c
the silvery streams :^d
He hath dispersed the nations that delight in war.
- 31 Chiefs^e come out of Egypt,
HIS hand urges Ethiopia against Elohim.

^y "The Lord of the stock of Israel." *Κυριον εκ πηγων Ισραηλ*. LXX. i. e. ex stirpe Israelis; the Lord, the son of Israel, according to the flesh." HORSLEY.—Perhaps, more strictly, "from the quarry of Israel," dug, as it were, from this pit, hewn from this rock. See Isaiah, li. 1.

^z Or, "defenders," "champions."

^a "Almost all the ancients read אלהים Lowth.—"Give commission, O God, to thy power." "Hasten that thou doest for us." HORSLEY.

^b A reed and a crocodile, we are told, was the emblem of Egypt. See POOLE.

^c רפס *pedibus calcando turbavit* (Arab. رفس et رفس *calcere, conculare*, spec. de camelis, pedibus aquam, antequam bibant, exturbantibus). See Sim. Lex. and authors there quoted.

^d "Simoni ברני potius videbatur

a sing. ברני *fons, aqua, fluvius*. Coll. ברני Syr. in Aphel. *produxit, exoriri fecit*. Arab. per DAB, *paucia emanavit aqua*, unde ברני *fluvius*: ut l. c. כסף ברני *sint aqua limpida*: vive nitidae instar argenti. Col. v. 14. Sic νάμα ἀργυρεον in Epigramm. ὑδαρ ἀργυροειδες apud Orpheum. Πόταμος ἀργυρεος apud Appianum. 'Fons argenteus,' apud Ovid. Vid. Lex. in verb. ברני. These annotations lead, I think, to a translation of this difficult passage, far preferable to that of Dr. Jubb, whom Bishop Horsley follows, which is,

Rebuke the wild beast of the rushes,
The assembly of those who place their strength
in the calves,
The people that excite themselves to the dance
with rattles of silver.

^e חשמן *magnas, optimas*. A rad.

Arab. חשם חשם *multas habuit, famulos et asseclas*. SIM. Lex. Comp. Michaelis in Parkhurst.

CHORUS.

32 Ye kingdoms of the earth, sing ye Elohim,
Chant ye the Lord.

SELAH.

33 —Him who rideth upon the heaven of heavens ‘as’ of old;^f
Lo! he uttereth a mighty sound with his voice.

34 Ascribe ye power unto Elohim;
His majesty is over Israel,
And his power in the skies.

35 Awful art thou, O Elohim, in thy sanctuary,
Elohim of Israel:
He hath given power and strength to his people;
Blessed be Elohim.

^f Perhaps “from the East.” Or, “the heavens, the eastern heavens.”

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm has appeared to most expositors as prophetic of the restoration of Israel in the last days; nor, when we consider the subject, can it well belong to any other event than this, which will form so conspicuous an occurrence at the era of the second advent. The prophetic imagery is borrowed, as usual, from the first exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt, or rather a memorial of former mercies and deliverances is celebrated, to encourage the waiting people of God to expect the same miraculous display of almighty power at the period of their final restoration. “The song opens with that solemn invocation which was used by the Israelites in the wilderness in the time of Moses, when the tent of the tabernacle was struck, and the Levites set forward with the sacred burden upon their shoulders.”

The restorer of Israel is to be considered as marching his people through the desert to take possession of the land of promise: and we have reason to think, that in some respects the second exodus will answer to the first, as the antitype to its type. So we read in Hosea chap. xi. 14, 15:

“Therefore, behold I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.”

Among the Israelites that came out of Egypt, some were rebellious and contumacious. There will be many such at the second advent, as we gathered from a foregoing Psalm, in the nominal Israel, that is prepared for restoration. On the former occasion, “they that believed not” and “with whom God was not well pleased, were overthrown in the desert:” so the prophecy before us announces that “the rebels are left on the dry rock.”

In the seventh to the tenth verse inclusive, the choral band records the wonders that accompanied the divine appearance on a former occasion, when Israel came out of Egypt.

Miraculous showers and an extraordinary supply of food were vouchsafed to these travellers in the wilderness.—“They thirsted not in the desert,”—and so we read in the parallel prophecies of the second exodus. “The wilderness and solitary place is glad for them:” and the reader will find much more to this effect, respecting the same people in the same circumstances, in the prophet Isaiah.

The 11th verse announces tidings of a great victory: tidings, as it should seem, received by these parties in the desert: numerous companies of singing women are represented as going forth, according to the custom of ancient times, to celebrate the news. The 12th, 13th, and 14th verses contain their song, “Kings of armies flee, &c.” This congratulatory song is addressed particularly, I conjecture, to the women of Israel, conceived as abiding in homely circumstances, by their “pots” or travelling kettles in the desert. But in consequence of these victories they will soon become enriched with the spoils of their enemies; and will show it, after their manner, in the more sumptuous style of their dress. This, I think, is the meaning of the allusion to the beautiful plumage of the dove, and to the snow in Salmon.

In the elegy of David over Saul, we find the prosperity and increased comforts of the people of Israel, denoted by a similar allusion to the increased elegance and splendour of the women's dress :

Daughters of Israel, weep for Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with elegant attire,
Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel.

Such are the figurative allusions to represent the victories of the great Captain of our salvation in the last days, and the subsequent prosperity of his restored people.

Of the enemy that was being subdued, we hear more below. The procession led by the symbols of the divine presence, is now supposed to be marching forward towards the holy mountain of Zion, the chosen residence of Israel's God. "The Psalmist," as Bishop Horsley observes, "poetically imagines the different hills as all ambitious of the honour, anxiously waiting God's decision, and ready to enter into a zealous contention ; *watching each other with an envious eye*. The lofty hill of Bashan first puts in its claim, pleading its stately height." The hill of Bashan stands pre-eminent in the view of the travellers that enter the Holy Land from the desert towards the east.

But all claimants are cut short : "The Lord has chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation:" and the expressions are remarkable : "Jehovah fixeth his dwelling here for ever." Zion, then, is not a type merely. This very spot is indeed to be the site of the New Jerusalem in the world to come. Truly, we may exclaim, "Wonderful things are spoken of thee, thou city of our God !"

In one sense indeed, our Lord Jesus Christ may be represented as ascending the hill of Zion and taking his station there, when he entered into heaven after his resurrection ; when "he passed through the heavens," "seen of Angels" to enter the better tabernacle, after he had "spoiled principalities and powers." And the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, quotes the 18th verse of the Psalm before us in application to that ascension, and to the gifts which the great Advocate then dispensed to his church. But it seems, that

was only a symbolical or incipient fulfilment of this prophecy, that its final accomplishment takes place when the Saviour shall visibly set up the throne of his kingdom—when “Jehovah shall reign in Zion and before his ancients gloriously.” The magnificence once displayed on Mount Sinai, will then be manifested in the sanctuary: and as our Lord, in the days of his humiliation, told Nicodemus, hereafter we shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man; and then will he pour greater blessings still upon his church on earth—blessings that shall have no end, and meet with no impediment. The day of Pentecost was the former rain, or the rain of the seed-time, but on a future day shall be poured the latter rain, or cropping rain: immediately preceding the general harvest—the universal ingathering of the people of God throughout the whole world.

In the 20th and three following verses we seem to be presented with a view of the enemy, over whom the victory has been obtained, which had previously been celebrated. And there can be no doubt, from the issue of the contest and all its circumstances, that the enemy is the great Antichrist, who had “planted the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas in the glorious holy mountain,” where “he comes to his end, and no one helps him.”^g

“I will turn him back from Bashan and from the shores of the sea.” This is as much as to say, He shall not pass to the eastward of the river Jordan. For Bashan, corresponding with the lands assigned to the half tribe of Manasseh, was on the northern extremity of the region beyond Jordan, as the shores of the Dead Sea are the southern. This exactly agrees with what is told to Daniel: “He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon;” describing evidently the same district to the east of Jordan and the Dead Sea. We may perhaps add to this, what we read in Joel, ii. 20: “But I will remove far from you the northern ‘army,’ and will drive him into a land barren and deso-

^g Daniel xi. 45.

late, with his face, or 'van,' towards the east, or Dead Sea: and his hinder part, or 'rear,' towards the utmost, 'or western' sea:" that is, clearly, he will be driven in a direction to miss the countries before described, where, as it should seem, some parts of Israel were advancing to take possession of Jerusalem. "And his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because," or "when he hath done great things."—He proceeds to do great exploits, as we shall see below, for the final victory was only *anticipated* in the 23rd verse, and in the song of the singers.

The twenty-fourth and three following verses contain, I am led to conclude, another record of merciful deliverances in the ages past. With such precedents before them, what may not this his waiting people, who return with prayer and supplication to their covenanted God, now expect! How often had their fathers witnessed the solemn processions of the choral bands, with the assembled people unto the sanctuary of Jehovah: on those occasions, when chastised by public calamities, and groaning under the oppression of some cruel enemy, Israel sought the God they had forsaken. "They returned and enquired early after God, and they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer;" then they blessed Elohim in their congregation, and remembered the promises respecting the Lord Messiah, their great deliverer, which was to be raised up from among their brethren. And many a time did their gracious God, when he saw their affliction, pity their distress, and would raise up some deliverer for them, who, in his miraculous achievements on their behalf, presented many a type and symbol of that deliverance which their Messiah was finally to accomplish for them. The sacred song touches upon some of these cases when in answer to their penitent prayer, God raised up some help for them. "Then was Benjamin reduced small, their ruler." We naturally think of the exaltation of Saul, the first anointed king, upon whom, notwithstanding his subsequent delinquencies, the Spirit of God did certainly fall, and he was deliverer of Israel. And there was a more ancient Benjamite among the judges of Israel, after their eighteen years of servitude

to the king of Moab, when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, a Benjamite. "The Princes of Judah their defence." Before the time of David, the tribe of Judah had afforded several defenders for Israel, as Caleb and Othniel; and the divine oracle when consulted on the death of Joshua, "who should go up first and fight against the Canaanites," pronounced the name of Judah. "The princes of Zebulon, the princes of Naphtali,"—this refers to the great deliverance under Deborah and Barak.—"Zebulon and Naphtali were a people that jeopardied their lives unto the death in the high places of the fields."—Judges v. chap. 18th ver. "The present" brought by the "kings" in the twenty-ninth verse, is an intimation of another party, brought from a different quarter of the world. The expressions of the Spirit in Isaiah are remarkable: "In that day shall a PRESENT be brought unto the Lord of Hosts, of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts, the Mount Zion."^h Again: "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee."ⁱ

But to proceed with our Psalm: in the 30th verse we have intimation of a check given to "the wild beast of the reeds," to "the head of a multitude of bulls and calves." Now, the wild beast of the reeds, there is no doubt, means, literally, the crocodile of the Nile—a meet emblem of Egypt, or of any persecuting tyrant that had got possession of that country: and here again we discover clearly, from a comparison of the parallel prophecies, what is meant. Joel's northern army was to do great things before it met its fate at the appointed spot, and after it was driven off from the people addressed in the prophecy. So we are told in Daniel,

^h Chap. xviii. 7.

ⁱ Chap. lx. 8, 9.

that, though Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon should escape, lying out of the line of his march; yet "he shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape: but he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt." This is beautifully represented by the bulls and calves disturbing with their feet the silvery streams of the land of Egypt.

"And the Libyans and Ethiopians shall be at his steps." This should mean, shall submissively attend his march; and so, I think, we are to understand the 31st verse. The Antichristian potentate having strengthened himself by the conquest and possession of Egypt and the neighbouring nations, turns back into Palestine with his recruited army: "chiefs, or mighty potentates, come out of Egypt: his hand urges, or precipitates, Ethiopia against God."* In Daniel we read, "But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many." It is on this return of the enemy from Egypt, that he plants the palace of his tabernacles between the seas in the glorious holy mountain, and the final catastrophe ensues—and all the kingdoms of the earth are called upon to celebrate the power and victory of God. With this ascription of praise the Psalm ends: and we cannot but remark, that, as in some former Psalms, so here, the victory is attributed to the VOICE of God:

He rideth upon the heavens of heavens as of old;
Lo! he uttereth a mighty sound with his voice.

"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them." The xixth chapter of Revelation explains this and the many parallel predictions which are found in the Jewish prophets. Ver. 11.

* Perhaps, however, this verse may be referred to the submission of Egypt and Ethiopia after the victory. Compare Isaiah xlv. 14.

“ And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse ; and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war : his eyes are as a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns ; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself : and he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood : and his name is called the WORD OF GOD.” And with the “ *sword that proceeded out of his mouth*,” is the final victory achieved over all these enemies of his church and people : he, then, is the same with the Michael of Daniel—the same that had lately led his people through the desert, though, perhaps, not fully manifested to them, as the once rejected Saviour, whom they had pierced : but “ the Lord from the stock of Israel ” becomes at length the object of their worship ; and thus the restoration of Jerusalem serves as a prelude to the manifestation of the heavenly Jerusalem, the city that comes down from God out of heaven, which is the mother of all the elect people of God.

PSALM LXIX.

- 1 SAVE me, O Elohim, for the waters are come
Even to my soul.
- 2 I have sunk into the mud of the raging pool,
Where there is no standing :
I am come into the depths of the waters,
And the floods have overwhelmed me.
- 3 I am spent with calling ; my throat is hoarse, my eyes have
failed,
While I looked for Elohim.
- 4 They are more than the hairs of my head,
Who hate me without cause ;
They are more numerous than I could tear from my head,¹
Who, without provocation, are my enemies ;

¹ “ More numerous than my locks.” HORSLEY.

While that which I have not taken

I am restoring.^m

5 Elohim, thou knowest my bondⁿ and my responsibility ;^o

They are not concealed from thee.

6 They who wait for thee will not be offended in me,

O Lord, Jehovah Sabaoth ;

They who seek thee will not be ashamed of me,

O Elohim of Israel.

7 Truly, for thy sake I have borne reproach ;

Shame hath covered my face.

8 I am become estranged from my brethren,

And an alien to the children of my mother :

9 Because jealousy for thine house hath eaten me up,

And the reproaches of them that reproached thee, have fallen
upon me :

10 When I would weep away my soul in fasting ;

Then was it turned to my reproach.

11 And when I would make my garment of sackcloth,

Then was I to them a jest.

12 I was the talk of them that sit in the gate,

And I was made the song of the drunkard.

13 But for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Jehovah ;

“ Be it ” the season of acceptance :

Answer me, O Elohim, in the abundance of thy tender love,^p

In the truth of thy salvation.

14 Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink ;

Let me be delivered from them that hate me, and from the
deep waters.

^m “ A proverbial expression : I have been accountable for the crimes of others.” Idem.

ⁿ That is, the nature of the obligation which I have taken upon myself, in consequence of my oath and covenant. See the Arab. **אלי ואני**. “ My plan of

recovery.” KENNICOTT.—Which Bishop Horsley had adopted in his translation, though in his notes he inclines to the common rendering “ folly.”

^o “ My offering for sin.” KENNICOTT.—Guilt as imputed to me.

^p Or, “ In flowing abundance is thine exuberant love.”

- 15 Let not the flood of waters overwhelm me,
And let not the deep swallow me up,
Nor the pit close her mouth upon me.
- 16 Hear me, O Jehovah, for abundant is thy tender love,
According to the greatness of thy compassion look on me :
- 17 And hide not thy face from thy servant,
For trouble is upon me—hasten to answer me.
- 18 Draw near to the rescue of my soul,
Deliver me because of mine enemies.
- 19 Thou hast known my reproach,
And my shame, and my disgrace :
All my adversaries are before thee.
- 20 Reproach^a hath broken my heart,
And I faint with sickness.^r
- And I looked for condolence, but there was none—
And for comforters, but I found them not :
- 21 And they gave me gall to eat,
And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.
- 22 Let their table become a snare before them,
And their prosperity be for a trap.
- 23 Their eyes be darkened, that they see not ;
And their loins continually totter.
- 24 Thine indignation 'be' poured out upon them,
And the heat of thine anger overtake them.
- 25 Let their habitation become desolate,
And there be none dwelling in their tent :
- 26 Because they have persecuted him whom thou hast smitten,
And have added^s to the anguish of him whom thou hast wounded.

^a Perhaps "Insult."

^r אִנּוּשָׁה "Aegritudine graviter affectus sum," vel, "ultra citroque moveri, ut fit, ubi quis animi deliquium patitur." Sim. Lex.

^s For יוֹסִיפוּ I read with the LXX. Vulgate, Hare, Houbigant, Secker, Lowth, and Horsley, יוֹסִיפוּ or יוֹסִיפוּ

- 27 Thou wilt impute to them iniquity according to their iniquity,
And they shall not come into thy justification :
- 28 They shall be blotted from the book of the living,
And not be written among the righteous.
- 29 But for me, humbled and sorrowful,
Thy salvation, O Elohim, shall set me on high.
- 30 I will praise the name of Elohim in song,
And I will magnify him with praise.
- 31 And this shall please Jehovah more than an ox,
An horned bullock with cloven hoof.
- 32 The humbled have seen and are glad,
“Seek ye Elohim, and your heart shall revive.”
- 33 For Jehovah hath hearkened unto the helpless,
And hath not disregarded his prisoners.
- 34 Let the heavens and the earth praise him,
The waters and all that moveth therein.
- 35 For Elohim will save Zion,
And build the cities of Judah.
- And they shall dwell there and possess it ;
- 36 Aye, the seed of his servants shall inherit it,
And they that love his name dwell therein.

EXPOSITION.

The subject of this Psalm is clear, the affliction of Messiah, when he appeared the first time “to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”—the cruel and ungrateful treatment he should then experience from the Jews; and their rejection and punishment in consequence, until at length in the latter days they shall turn to the Lord, and be restored to their city and to their country. The Psalm, therefore, although the commencement of its scenery is at the first advent, connects itself, in the sequel, with the foregoing

Psalms which predict the events of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The four first verses, like many of the first Psalms, present before us the suffering Redeemer, while he sinks beneath the burdens of the punishment of our transgressions, and we hear him "in the days of his flesh, pouring forth his strong cries and entreaties to Him that is able to save him from death."

In the midst of these sufferings he complains of the causeless hatred of his persecutors, and describes their numbers. Our blessed Lord applies, in John, xv. 24, 25, an expression in this part of the Psalm to himself, where he says of the Jews: "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, *They hated me without a cause.*"

The latter part of the 4th and the 5th verse are exactly parallel to Isaiah, liii. 4, 5: "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; but he was wounded for our transgressions, &c." Though his heavenly Father knew, his persecutors knew not, the nature of his bond and responsibility—that he had covenanted to make an atonement for the sins of his people; and, "restoring what he had not taken, was dying the just for the unjust." They accordingly treat him as suffering for his own sins, and regard him as a criminal.

But (verse 6th) there would be found some who would not be offended in him, or ashamed of him and of his doctrine, whom the world despised, and whose memory all would load with infamy.

The 7th verse is addressed, I conceive, to the people before described as not ashamed of him, who were Israelites indeed in whom was no guile. On their account it was he suffered disgrace and shame; a sufficient reason, that He, who in the sight of others had no form nor comeliness, should in their view be exceeding precious and "altogether lovely."

The 8th and 9th verses express the cunnity he had met

with even from his nearest relations ; because of his jealousy for the purity of God's holy religion. "Thine house," I think, is not addressed to God, but to his people : the house which God had erected for them, and which was emblematical of his church. We are told by the Evangelist, that when Christ purified the temple from them that bought and sold in it, they remembered that it was written of him, "*The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.*"^t The last part of the same verse is also quoted concerning Christ by St. Paul, Rom. xv. 3 : "For even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written, 'The reproaches of them that reproached thee,' i. e. as the Apostle's context proves to us, the reproaches cast upon my weak and depressed people 'fell upon me.'"

The 10th and two following verses afford a complete picture of the despised and persecuted Man. The Evangelists enter not enough into the private history of our Lord, to show us the exact and circumstantial fulfilment of this prophecy : his "becoming a jest," especially, and "the song of the drunkard." But it is so like what many of his followers in their measure have had to endure from their neighbours and acquaintance, that we may well recollect in this view the words of Christ : "Marvel not if the world hate you : it hated me before it hated you."

The 13th verse I understand as a prayer of our Lord, not for himself, but for the nation of these persecutors, "The season of acceptance," is the time of Israel's repentance and restoration.

The 14th and five following verses plainly describe the passion of our Lord, when "he feared" in the dreadful prospect of his horrible dissolution, and the departure of his soul into the regions of death.

The 20th and 21st verses mark so particularly the circumstance which attended the execution of the despised and rejected Criminal, whom his enemies delight to mock in his sufferings, presenting to him gall and vinegar, that it is impossible to mistake its application.

As indisputable is the application of the 22d and four

^t John ii. 17.

succeeding verses, to the calamities that fell on the Jews for their ill-treatment of Jesus of Nazareth, even if the Apostle had not pointed it out as he has done, Rom. xi. 9, 10.

The description of the rejection of the Jews, in respect to Gospel privileges, in the 27th and 28th verses, well deserves our attention, and the attention of all possessors of revelation, as it represents what is the principal part of the curse which awaits those who reject the only Saviour. They have no share in the justification by faith through a Saviour's righteousness—their iniquity is not imputed to the divine Surety, as in the case of the believer; but it is imputed to themselves. They “die in their sins,” and “the wrath of God abideth on them.”—They go to receive the just recompense of their evil deeds—to “be judged according to their works.”

The 29th and two following verses are spoken by the Saviour; but, in the usual style of these sacred songs, he speaks as from his mystical body the church, as partaker with them in all their affliction, when he himself is “caught up to God and to his throne,” and as bearing part with them in the solemnities of their worship. And here we find a remarkable prediction of the worship of the Christian church, as contrasted with that of the Old Testament church. That of the latter was “the ox, the horned bullock with cloven hoof:” that of the former is, *songs of praise, confession, and thanksgivings*.

The 32d and 33d verses relate, I have no doubt, to the conversion of the Jews in the last days, when God shall have accomplished the number of his elect. These are the “afflicted,” the “helpless,” and “the prisoners,” to whom, at length, the Lord turns his regards, according to his declaration by Moses: “And yet for all that when they are in the land of their enemies;”—“if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept the punishment of their iniquity;”—“then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham; and I will remember the land.”^u

^u See Lev. xxvi.

That this is the event predicted in the Psalm, is clear from verse 35th. Zion is saved: the cities of Judah are built: and then the restored captives, reconciled to their God, dwell in religious peace and prosperity. The heavens, and the earth, and seas, are called upon to praise God for this. The restoration of the Jews is "life from the dead;" and is immediately connected with the coming of Christ, and the establishment of his universal kingdom.

PSALM LXX.*

- 1 'BE pleased,' O Elohim, to deliver me ;
O Jehovah, haste thee to help me.
- 2 Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek my soul,
Let them be driven back and brought to confusion that desire
my hurt.
- 3 Let them, in their turn, have shame for their recompense,
Who say, Aha ! aha !
- 4 Let them rejoice and be glad in thee,^{*}
All who seek thee.
"Magnified is Jehovah !" let them say continually,
Who love thy salvation.
- 5 And as for me, depressed and helpless,
O Elohim hasten to me.
Thou art my helper and deliverer ;
O Jehovah, do not tarry.

* For the Notes see Psalm XL.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm, with a very few alterations, will be found to be the same as the closing part of the XLth Psalm. It, there, celebrated the victory of Christ, in the confusion and

discomfiture of his enemies in his triumphant resurrection from the dead. It is here repeated to celebrate the final triumphs of Christ over all the enemies of his mystical body the Church, together with that very small remnant left in restored Jerusalem in the last days to occupy the land of promise under their new covenant. For he considers himself as, in a certain sense, depressed and helpless, while any of his poor members were suffering upon earth. The reader will recollect a similar repetition of Psalm XIV. in the LIIId, in almost the same circumstances. These are not copies accidentally repeated, as some have imagined; but their design is plain when we come to have a right perception of the meaning of the Psalms.

Nor do I think that the variations in the readings of two or three words are accidental or by mistake of scribes. The two principal of these variations occur in verse 3rd. In the first line, instead of, "They shall be desolate and have shame for their reward;" another expression is substituted which I think will bear the sense given it above; "They in their turn, &c." In the second line, "to me" is omitted; so that we are at liberty to suppose the insult was not immediately to the speaker.

Now, we shall recollect, that the Jews were the visible adversaries at the first advent, who gloried in the fall of Christ, when he fell personally into the hands of his murderers:—in the second advent, the Jews, at least the survivors of them, are a party befriended; and the Anti-christian nations are the adversaries to be visited, who will be found to exult in like manner over the depressed cause of Christ, in the last days. But they too in their turn shall be rewarded with shame. Thus in the Lamentations of Jeremiah:^y "They have heard that I sigh: there is none to comfort me: all mine enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that thou hast done it: thou wilt bring the day that thou hast called, and they shall be like unto me. All their wickedness cometh before thee; and thou dost unto them, as thou hast done unto me for all my transgres-

^y Chap. i. 21, 23.

sion: for my sighs are many, and my heart is faint." Compare chap. iv. 22: "The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; he will no more carry thee away into captivity: he will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom; he will discover thy sins."

PSALM LXXI.

- 1 IN thee, O Jehovah, have I taken shelter,
I shall never be ashamed;
Thou wilt deliver me in thy righteousness, so that I shall
escape.
- 2 Incline thine ear unto me and save me,
Thou hast been to me a strong rock, whither I could alway
resort.
- 3 Thou hast ever commanded to save me,
For thou art my rock and my fortress.
- 4 O Elohim, deliver me from the hand of the wicked 'one,'
From the grasp of the iniquitous and cruel:*
- 5 For thou art my hope, O Lord:
Jehovah hath been my confidence from my youth.
- 6 Upon thee have I leaned from the birth,
From the womb of my mother thou hast been my protector.^a
My praise was continually of thee.
- 7 I have been a wonder to many,
But thou wert my strong shelter.
- 8 My mouth shall be full of thy praise,
Of thy glory all the day long.

² "Perverse and violent." The vile person and churl. Isaiah xxxii.

5. ^a "עוֹלֵלִים *evellens me*, evulsor meus

—sed Alb. Schultens ad rad. עָוָל

Arab. *נָזַח* *retribuit*, refert, et per *re-tributorem* sive *benefactorem* meum exponit, quod *præfero*." SIMON.—"My protector." HORSLBY.

- 9 Thou wilt not cast me off in the season of old age ;
Thou wilt not forsake me when my strength is consumed.
- 10 When my enemies conferred about me,
And they that watch for my life took counsel together,
- 11 Saying, "Elohim has forsaken him,
Pursue and take him, there is none to deliver ;"
- 12 O Elohim, thou art not far from me :
My Elohim, hasten to my help.
- 13 They shall be ashamed and consume away that 'are' hostile
to me ;
They shall be covered with reproach and shame that seek my
hurt.
- 14 For me, continually, will I hope,
And will praise thee more and more.
- 15 My lips shall tell of thy righteousness,
Of thy salvation, all the day long,
For I know not the measure.
- 16 I will enter upon the mighty deeds of the Lord Jehovah,
I will commemorate thy righteous acts—thine only.
- 17 O Elohim, thou has taught me from my youth,
And until now I show thy wonders :
- 18 And even in a heavy and hoary old age,^b
O Elohim, thou wilt not forsake me :
- Till I declare thine arm to this generation,
To all that cometh, thy might and thy righteousness.

^b "זָקֵן I apprehend," observes Mr. Parkhurst, "is not properly a word of *time* (for it is joined with בָּאִים *באים* with שְׁבַע יָמִים and the like), but relates to the *effect* that age has upon the body: it is opposed to נָעַר which denotes *sprightliness, agility, or activity of youth*; and in Arabic is used for *carrying a burden, or taking it up in order to carry it* ('portavit, portandum sustulitque

onus.' CASTELL.): and though זָקֵן is less than שִׁבְרָן *decayed age*; yet I think it signifies one who is *gravis annis, heavy with age*, and refers to that *weight and inactivity* which generally creeps upon men as they grow old, when, as Horace remarks, 'Res omnes gelidè timideque ministrant;' and are *heavy and indolent*, both in mind and body."

- 19 O Elohim, still what thou doest is high !
Great things, O Elohim ! who is like to thee ?
- 20 After thou hast caused us to see afflictions
Great and sore, thou wilt revive us again.
- And from the lower parts of the earth thou wilt bring us up
again :
- 21 Thou wilt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.
- 22 I also will praise thee with the psaltery,
Thy truth, O Elohim :
- I chant thee with the harp,
O Holy One of Israel.
- 23 My lips shall rejoice when I sing to thee,
And my soul which thou hast redeemed :
- 24 Also my tongue all the day long
Shall tell of thy righteousness ;
- For they are put to shame, they are sunk in infamy,
That sought my hurt.

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley has remarked respecting this Psalm: "I am entirely at a loss for a particular subject of this Psalm. It suits not David, who, in his old age, had no troubles: it suits not Christ, who had no old age. Is not the suppliant the church in these latter days, when faith to all appearance is wearing out?" I had thought, that this Psalm was to be referred personally to our blessed Lord. For, though it is true he had no old age, but was cut off in the prime of manhood; yet I conceived a premature old age might be ascribed to "the Man of Sorrows," as it certainly is in the VIth Psalm. But upon mature consideration I adopt the Bishop's suggestion; to which I am chiefly led, by the connexion in which we find this Psalm: for every one of these sacred songs which compose the second book in the Hebrew division, will be found to touch upon

the circumstances of the church in the prospect of the second advent: in like manner as the generality of the Psalms of the first book, have a personal reference to our blessed Lord—more in connexion with the first advent. This Psalm, therefore, I understand of the church in these last days, and particularly of the church among the Gentiles. For, as sacrifice and offering ever distinguish in prophecy the restored remnant of the Jews, even when their Redeemer appears;^c so the church of the Gentiles is ever known by her song of praise and confession to her reconciled God: which is truly descriptive of the Christian worship in every age and country.

The three first verses I understand rather as the language of confident trust, though it is mingled with prayer; and this language becomes the *gray hairs* of the church, which has experienced so often the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord, and has survived to see fresh light and knowledge poured upon the Sacred Scriptures.

The 4th verse anticipates deliverance from the grasp of the cruel persecutor; viz. from that “wicked.” For the **WICKED**, in the Psalms, denotes the great antichristian power of the Roman empire. This verse is, therefore, particularly applicable to the Protestant and reformed churches that have been saved, and are still preserved from the grasp of the Papacy, its upholders and its successors, in violent or deceitful persecution of Christ’s flock.

In the 5th and following verses the church is made to profess its dependence upon the Divine protection from the first formation of its society, through a long course of years, till it has attained, metaphorically speaking, extreme old age, when her institutions seem ready to decay with time, and her strength, as a society, or body politic, is much reduced; so much so, that the adversaries begin to consult together upon the probability of the extinction of the name of Christ. “God hath forsaken him: pursue and take him, for there is none to deliver.” But in the midst of these dangers of the last days, the members of Christ are en-

^c Compare Psalm L.

couraged to say, "Thou dost not cast me off in the season of old age; thou forsakest me not when my strength is consumed."

The Church, as a body, was certainly never in so weak and helpless a state to resist the inroads of her enemies, and to convey the forms of religion to posterity, as at this present time. The principle of disunion has preyed upon her very vitals; and the divine institutions of the ministry and of the holy sacraments have been so neglected by her watchmen, and so roughly handled by those whom necessary zeal or unnecessary presumption has called forth as her repairers, that the interest of Christ's religion, in these western nations, may be justly compared to an old mouldering edifice, undermined by neglect, and ill propped by modern improvements; so that, humanly speaking, it seems likely soon to fall into ruins. But the Lord of the elements is its protector: "O God, thou art not far from me, &c.:" therefore, the church shall yet stand, divided as is the house against itself, to see the shame and confusion of all her foes.

This is the ground of the praises which commence in the 14th verse, truly descriptive of those psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, that are now offered up to the Saviour God in all the churches and societies of the saints. The state of the church is in many respects what is described in the 18th verse, "a heavy and hoary old age." But God will not forsake it. She shall still be found the faithful witness to the might and righteousness of her Saviour, while generation succeeds to generation. And whatever distinct dispensation shall gather the outcasts of Israel, and lead to the appearance of the Saviour; there shall be finally "one fold under one Shepherd," and all shall be in their appointed mansions, partakers of the blissful reign of the King of saints. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one."^d God still is high, and will still do great things for his afflicted and depressed church; and at the period, it should seem, when she is reduced to the lowest ebb, and you might think that

^d Zechariah xiv. 9.

the promise must soon fail, and the "gates of hell prevail against it," suddenly shall her help appear, and comfort surround her on every side.

Well, then, may the Gentile church take her harp, and chant, and sing, and celebrate with joyful lips the wonders of redeeming love, telling all the day long of the righteousness of her Saviour God. And though the harp of Zion is still silent, and hung disconsolate on the willows in the places of her captivity, the Christian psaltery should resound the praises of the Holy One of Israel, and anticipate the time when the adversary shall be put to shame and sink in infamy, at the day of "HIS appearing and kingdom."

PSALM LXXII.*

- 1 O ELOHIM, thou wilt give thy judgment^f to the king,^g
And thy righteousness unto the royal child :
- 2 He shall judge thy people in righteousness,
And thy afflicted with equity.
- 3 The hills shall bring peace to the people,
And the mountains with righteousness.
- 4 He shall do right to the afflicted people ;
He shall save the children of the helpless,
And he shall break in pieces the oppressor.
- 5 He shall endure as long as the sun,
And in the presence of the moon to all generations.

* "The Jewish expositors, namely, the Chaldee paraphrast, Midrash, Tephillim, the book Siphre, Solomon Jarchi, Aben Ezra, David Kimchi, and Saadiah Gaon, all refer this Psalm to the Messiah. Huet. D. E. prop. vii." Horsley.—The Psalm, as Horsley observes, "is a prediction, not

a prayer."—"King and king's son," as Mudge well observes, "are the same person."

^f Vindication from wrong.

^g Right and authority to execute judgment and justice. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, &c."

- 6 He shall descend like the rain on the pastured grass,
Like the showers of sprinkling rain.
- 7 During his days the earth shall bring forth righteousness,^h
And abundance of peace till the moon be no more.
- 8 And he shall reign from sea to sea,
And from the river to the ends of the earth.
- 9 The opposersⁱ shall kneel before him,
And his enemies lick the dust.
- 10 The kings of Tarshish and the isles shall bring presents,
The kings of Seba and Sheba offer gifts :
- 11 And all kings shall prostrate themselves before him,
All nations shall serve him.
- 12 For he shall deliver the destitute when he crieth,
The afflicted also, and him that hath no helper.
- 13 He shall look with pity upon the reduced and destitute,
And shall save the souls of the destitute.
- 14 He shall redeem their soul from fraud and violence,
And precious shall be their blood in his eyes.^k
- 15 'The destitute' shall live, and HE shall give to him of the gold
of Sheba,
And HE shall interpose in his behalf continually,
All the day long shall HE bless him.
- 16 And there shall be stripes^l of corn in the land,
Unto the summit of the hills.
- The top^m thereof shall rustle like Lebanon,
It shall flourish near the town like the grass of the earth.ⁿ

^h LXX. Vulg. Hare, and Horsley.

ⁱ I would refer נִצָּחִים to נִצָּחִים to strive or contend, as the parallelism seems to require. Comp. ضيم injuria, oppressio.

^k To avenge it as their Redeemer.

^l "אֶרֶץ פֶּסֶת vel פֶּסֶת stria vel stria frumenti. h. e. frumentum per longas strias crescit. Aliis particula minuta ; vel sparsio, i. e. grana

sparsa, seges. al. copia. Coll. Arab.

فَش diffudit, et Chald. פֶּסֶת diffudit se." SIM. LEX.—"A piece or patch of corn." HORSLEY and PARKHURST. "Plenty of grain." GENDES.

^m "Ears," or "fruit."

ⁿ "They, the crops, shall flourish like a forest—like the grass of the earth," HOUBIGANT.

- 17 His name shall be for ever,^o
 His name shall spread before the sun ;
 ‘ All the tribes of the earth ’^p shall be blessed in him,
 All nations shall call him blessed.
- 18 Blessed be Jehovah, Elohim ;
 The Elohim of Israel, who alone performeth wonders.
- 19 And blessed be his glorious name for ever,
 And let his glory fill the whole earth.

Amen and Amen.

- 20 Finished are the prayers of David the son of Jesse.^q

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

^o “ Forte legendum יכון *stabile erit* (nomen ejus), quod commendare videntur LXX. (Vulg. Hieron.), Chald.” SIM. Lex.

^p See LOWTH and LXX.

^q Some suppose that this is the last of the Psalms digested and put in order by David himself; the rest that

follow being collected by Hezekiah and the Levites. Bishop Horsley is of opinion that this line has reference only to this particular book, and that the sense is, that David, the son of Jesse, had nothing to pray for or to wish beyond the great things described in this Psalm.

EXPOSITION.

The subject of this Psalm cannot be mistaken : “ The reign of the righteous king, whose kingdom extends over all the earth,” can apply to nothing else than the promised kingdom of the Messiah.

It is said in Isaiah :^r “ Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest ; as rivers of water in a dry place ; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” And in Jeremiah :^s after a woe denounced to the pastors that had scattered the Lord’s flock, and a prediction of the remnant being gathered out of all countries, it is said : “ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up to David a righ-

^r Chap. xxxii. 1, 2.

^s Chap. xxiii.

teous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely : and this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**"

We need only produce one more quotation from the prophet Daniel,^t and we shall have a sufficient clue to the meaning of the Psalm before us : " And I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given unto him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

To this event only, can be the application of this Psalm, which opens with a prediction of a righteous king, sitting upon the throne of his kingdom, redressing every wrong, and removing all injustice and oppression—that injustice and oppression especially, under which his afflicted people had so long groaned.

The meaning of the 3rd verse is differently understood. Bishop Horsley is of opinion, "that these mountains and hills allude to the nature of the land of Judea." Geddes supposes an allusion to the custom of announcing good or bad news from the tops of mountains and other eminences. And it has been argued from many passages of Scripture, that the Holy Land, "the glory of all lands," will not only be the happy spot where the natural Israel shall be restored ; but will be in some sort, the spot where the great metropolis of Messiah's kingdom, the new Jerusalem, will descend out of heaven. "The heavens are his throne, the earth is his footstool," and some locality must be ascribed to the heavenly residence of Christ, and of the saints of the resurrection.

This benign reign is to last while the mundane system stands, even for ever and ever, (verse 5th), and is to be

^t Chap. vii. 13, 14.

extended over all the earth (verse 8th). This kingdom, moreover, is to be founded on the ruin of the dominion of every tyrant and oppressor: the beast and the false prophet are to perish, and Satan is to be first bound for a thousand years, and then cast into the lake of fire; and great is to be the peace of his once afflicted, but now avenged people, (verse 14th).

The gold of Sheba, and the very fruitful country described in the 15th and 16th verses, may be understood as general symbols of the splendour and happy plenty of Messiah's reign. As it respects the earthly subjects of the heavenly kingdom, there may be a literal fulfilment; but with respect to the heavenly coadjutors of the King of Glory—the dead in Christ, that were raised in their glorified bodies, and those of his elect who had been found on their pilgrimage when the day of the Lord came, and who were “changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” and found “mortality swallowed up of life;”—with respect to these, the intimations of grandeur and plenty, the gold and the luxuriant corn, can be only symbols of heavenly things and spiritual enjoyments. Such is the prediction concerning the last dispensation which respects this lower world. For this, David and the church devoutly pray. The coming of this glorious kingdom consummates all their prayers and wishes: “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”

THE THIRD BOOK OF PSALMS,

ACCORDING TO THE HEBREW DIVISION.

ספר שליש

PREFACE.

The third book, according to the Hebrew Psalter, begins in this place, containing the Psalms from the LXXIII^d to the LXXXIXth inclusive. The ten first Psalms are ascribed to Asaph: their subjects are similar to those of the second book.—The second advent, and the restoration of Israel, as the leading themes. The two next inscribed to the sons of Korah are upon the same subject. The following, the LXXXVIth, which is ascribed to David, is one of those that depict the sufferings and humiliation of the Son of God in the days of his flesh. The LXXXVIIth is of a particular character. It contains, as it were, a note of time, “The Messiah has been born,” and “the heathen shall record it, though his own people will not receive him.” The LXXXVIIIth exhibits the awful picture of the soul of the Redeemer, a separate spirit, a prisoner in the horrid abyss. The last Psalm of this book contains a general view of the covenanted mercies of God with the spiritual David; the seeming failure of that covenant, when the Redeemer or his cause was laid prostrate, while the enemy prevailed; but at the same time, the sure anticipation of final help and victory.

PSALM LXXIII.^a

- 1 ¹ SURELY Elohim is good to Israel,
To the pure in heart :²
- 2 But for me, within a little, my feet had slipt,
My steps were almost gone :
- 3 While I enviously beheld the vain-glorious,³
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
- 4 For there are no bands to them,⁴
Their strength^a is perfect and firm.
- 5 They have no share in the toil of mortality,
Neither are they affected with the troubles of man :
- 6 Hence pride is the chain of their neck,
The robe of violence investeth them :
- 7 Their iniquity^b issues from within,
The imaginations of their hearts burst forth ;^c
- 8 They speak jestingly of evil ;^d
They talk high concerning oppression ;
- 9 They set their mouths in^e the heavens,
And their tongue traverseth the earth :^f

^a This Psalm is superscribed to Asaph : and that Asaph was a prophet, and was employed, together with David, to publish these inspired songs, appears from 2 Chron. xxix. 30: "Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord, with the words of David and of Asaph the Seer."

^v Or, "assuredly."

^x "Those in whose spirit there is no guile."

^y "I was indignant at the foolish."

HORSLEY.

^z "Knots," or "difficulties."

PARKHURST.—"Vincula." SIMON.—
"Fatalities in their death." HORSLEY.
"Bands of pain, of sickness."

^a "Body." GESSENIUS. — "Sound and well-fed are their bodies."

^b The versions and three MSS. have עוֹנְמוֹ "The various lection commends itself by its suitableness to the place: and that חֶלֶב signifies the *pericardium*, Schnurrer has proved on Psalm xvii. 10." BOOTHROYD. — "Ooze out."

^c Literally, "swelling up to a full drop, ready to fall."

^d Literally, "they joke and talk."

מוֹרָה *derisit, subsannavit*. Coll. rad. Chald. et Syr. מוֹרָה *derisit, subsannavit, mimum agit*. Arab. مَات *vecors, fatuus est*.

^e "Against."

^f So Horsley.

- 10 Wherefore his people return confounded,
And abundant tears are wrung from them ;^g
- 11 While they say, "How is it that El approves?
And is there approbation in the Most High?"^h
- 12 Lo, these are ungodly,
Yet they always prosper, and increase in wealth.
- 13 Surely, then, I cleansed my heart in vain,
And washed my hands in innocency.
- 14 For I am troubled all the day long,
And chastened every morning."
- 15 Had I said, "I will account it so,"
Lo, I had wronged the generation of thy children.ⁱ
- 16 And I thought to understand this :
A grievous thing was it in mine eyes,
- 17 Until I entered into the sacred 'decrees'^k of El,¹
'Until'^m I considered their latter end :
- 18 Surely thou wilt set them in slippery places,
Thou wilt cast them down in their exaltations !ⁿ
- 19 How are they brought to destruction in a moment !
They are consumed, they are brought to nothing.
- 20 O Lord, as a waking man his dream,
Thus when thou arisest, thou wilt disregard their vain show.
- 21 Truly my heart would fret itself,^o
My reins were grieved within me ;

^g See Parkhurst in הללם Horsley renders, "Therefore his people sit woe-begone, and waters are abundantly wrung from them," or "waters of a full cup of sorrow are drained to them."

^h Does El indeed notice,
Is their recognition with the Most High ?

ⁱ The last-mentioned author renders this, "If I resolve to argue thus, I should be a traitor to the generation of thy children ; i. e. instrumental to their delusion."

^k Or, "holy purposes."

¹ "That is, Until I entered into the secret grounds of God's dealings with mankind."—"N.B. It is remarkable, that the original word for 'sanctuary' in this place is plural, which is unexampled when the sanctuary is literally meant." Idem.

^m Kennicott.

ⁿ "למשואות from the root נשא not שואה ; so the LXX. understand the word here and in other places." HORSLEY.

^o In my thoughts I work myself up to angry and invidious feelings.

- 22 Aye, I was stupid, and could not understand,
I was like a beast before thee :
- 23 With respect to me, I am continually with thee,
Thou holdest me by the right hand.
- 24 Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel,
And at last wilt take me to glory.
- 25 Whom have I in heaven ' but thee ?' ^p
And there is none on earth that I delight in, as in thee.
- 26 My flesh and my heart are consumed,
Elohim is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.
- 27 But, lo ! they that depart from thee shall perish,
Thou cuttest off all who are faithless ^q to thee.
- 28 But to me—to me it is sweet to draw near to Elohim,
I have fixed in the Lord Jehovah my confidence :
- 29 To be telling of all thy works,
In the gates of the daughter of Zion. ^r

^p Or,
Whom have I in heaven !
And as in thee, in nothing have I delighted
on earth.

^q Or, "have adulterously departed."
^r This last line is found in the
Septuagint.

EXPOSITION.

The Psalm which commences this series evidently details the experience of a believer, under a temptation which assaulted his mind, when he contemplated the extraordinary prosperity of some remarkably wicked people. No doubt the temptation is common, and the Psalm of general application in the case of the individual who may be harassed with a similar temptation. But considering the nature of the Psalms in general, and from some particular expressions that I shall presently notice, I conclude, that a temptation of the church, in the last days, "when iniquity shall abound, and the love of many wax cold," is especially intended.

If this exposition be right, the picture of the church in the first verse, faith and love almost extinct, is an awful

prediction of the times that are coming. But have we not similar intimations in other scriptural prophecies? Our Lord has said, "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith upon earth?"

The description of these prosperous worldlings in the 4th and following verses, though, in some respects, it suits the scoffers—the enemies of religion in all ages; yet if we compare the other descriptions of "the scoffers of the last days," we shall see reason to conclude, that it belongs emphatically to them.

Their bold defiance of heaven and earth (verse 9th,) characterises not so exactly the sinners of old, as the atheists of these last times. The church's enemies of past ages were ever held in the bonds of some superstition or false worship, while they persecuted the true; but these have cast off all fear of God, all thought of a hereafter, and are held by no tie moral or religious.

Supposing the remarkable prosperity of these persons, showing to the eyes of sense, how well the newly illuminated world can do without religion, and any observance of the sacred ordinances of worship: how likely is it, that the temptation detailed in the 11th and following verses will prevail, among even the true members of the church of Christ! Nay, I may ask, is not something of this sort the consequence of that increased intercourse, which professors of religion have with the gay and irreligious, in the present relaxed state of modern society? Let us watch, the temptation is certainly abroad; and an interval of peace and prosperity will show it more and more. The church is likely to be reduced to a lower ebb by these trials of her faithfulness, than ever she has been by the violence of persecution. The 15th and two following verses point out the cure for this temptation.

It is a believing view of the providence of God, ever active though unseen and unperceived by sense; ever accomplishing his own righteous plans, even in his sufferance of the partial exaltation of the wicked. And we are especially to attend to "the sacred decrees" of God, as revealed in prophecy; for there it is, that we learn the end of these

scoffers of the last age. We shall find, "that their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

The 19th and 20th verses describe the infliction of this judgment; and there are two evidences that it is the judgment of the Antichrist of the last days. First, its suddenness—it comes in a moment: at their highest exaltation they are brought to nothing. This is not the usual progress of that judgment, which in ordinary cases overtakes the wicked and the persecutor; but it is, according to all the predictions of prophecy, remarkably so, in the case of the judgment of the last mortal foe. Again, this wonderful dispersion of the vain adversary, is to be when the "Lord ariseth." It is none other than that apostate and his upholders, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming."

In the 21st and subsequent verses we have a beautiful view of the church, soon to be rendered triumphant, bewailing her impatient and unbelieving heart, and upbraiding herself for her senseless stupidity and carnality: but she acknowledges, at the same time, the care of her divine Keeper: when she seemed ready to deny her Lord, he prayed for her, "that her faith should not fail." The Lord is her strength, and his firm hold of her saves her, when she "is almost gone, her feet have well nigh slipt." Her Guide has conducted her through all her perils, and she now enters upon the state of glory; she sees the wicked apostates perish from off the earth. Henceforth "her walls are *salvation*, and her gates *praise*."^s And let us remember, what concerns the church as a body, has a reference to every individual member of the same, and may apply to many circumstances in his pilgrimage.

^s Isaiah lx. 18.

PSALM LXXIV.¹

- 1 **WHY**, O Elohim, hast thou cast us off entirely ?
Why smoketh thy wrath against the sheep of thy pasture ?
- 2 Remember the congregation thou hast purchased of old,
Hast redeemed as the rod of thine inheritance,²
The hill of Zion, the place where thou hast dwelt.
- 3 The high place of thy feet³ is become a perpetual desolation,
The enemy hath destroyed everything⁴ in thy sanctuary.
- 4 Thine adversaries roared in the midst of thy congregation,
They set up their banners instead of the 'sacred' tokens.
- 5 He is distinguished who climbeth up aloft,
With axes, to the chequered wood.⁵
- 6 And now at once the carved work
They break with hatchets and mallets :
- 7 They have set fire to thy sanctuary,
They have laid open the dwelling-place of thy name to the
ground.
- 8 They said in their hearts, We will destroy them altogether ;
They burnt all the houses of El in the land.
- 9 We saw not our 'sacred' tokens, there was no longer any
prophet ;
Aye, there is none with us who knoweth how long 'it shall
be.'
- 10 How long, O Elohim, shall the adversary reproach,
And the enemy revile thy name continually ?

¹ This Psalm is also ascribed to Asaph.

² That is, "the allotment of thine inheritance."

³ "Sublimitas pedum tuorum."
JEROM.—"Perhaps the height of thy footsteps may denote the high moun-

tains which were used to be trodden by thy feet." HORSLEY.

⁴ Reading with Bishop Horsley כל הרע instead of כל הרע

⁵ Comp. שבך 2 Chron. iv. 12, 13. Or, "twisted wood-work."

- 11 Wherefore returnest thou thine hand,
Thy right hand into thy bosom ?
SELAH.^a
- 12 But Elohim 'was' my king of old,
Working deliverance in the midst of the earth.
- 13 It was thou that dividedst the sea in thy strength,
Thou didst break the heads of the dragons in the waters :
- 14 Thou didst bruise the heads of leviathan,
Thou gavest him for food to the people, the inhabitants of the
desert.
- 15 It was thou that causedst the fountain and torrent to burst
forth,
Thou that driedst up mighty rivers.
- 16 The day is thine, and the night is thine,
Thou hast prepared the light and the sun :
- 17 Thou hast set all the boundaries of the earth,
Thou hast formed summer and winter.
- 18 Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached Jehovah,
And the impious people have blasphemed thy name.
- 19 Give not up the soul of thy turtle-dove to the assembled host ;^b
The assembly of thy afflicted forget not for ever.
- 20 Have respect unto the covenant, for darkness is at the full,
The earth is the habitation of violence.
- 21 O, let not the afflicted return ashamed,
Let the helpless and destitute praise thy name.
- 22 Arise, O Elohim, contend in thine own cause,
Observe how the impious reproach thee all the day long.
- 23 Disregard not the voice of thine enemies,
The uproar of the rebels ascendeth continually.

^a According to another reading,
"altogether," "to tally."

^b See 2 Samuel xxiii. 11.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm is evidently a prayer for the dispersed of Israel; lamenting the desolation of the Holy Land, and calling upon the God of their fathers to deliver and restore them. We have already remarked respecting these Psalms, that though they especially concern the natural Israel; yet, inasmuch as the Redeemer's coming and the establishment of his heavenly kingdom, are intimately connected with the restoration of the Jews, and their conflict against their adversaries, the whole church of Christ has a common interest in these predictions, and may, with the utmost propriety, offer them to God as part of the daily sacrifice of praise or confession.

The Psalm begins with bewailing the long continuance of that desolation which had dispersed the ancient people of the Lord. His pity is claimed for that sacred spot once the beloved residence of Jehovah, and destined, as many prophecies declare, to be the scene of the still brighter manifestation of his glory.

The 3d and following verses seem to be a plain description, as the author of the Syriac version, and many of the Jews suppose, of the destruction of the temple and city by the Romans. The length of the desolation bewailed, forbids us, as has been observed by many, to apply it to the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, or by Antiochus. Besides, under the former conqueror, the spirit of prophecy had not ceased, which however is the subject of lamentation, in the 9th verse. And Antiochus Epiphanes, though he defiled the temple, did not burn it to the ground. Every circumstance, therefore, leads us to apply the Psalm to that destruction of Jerusalem, when "the abomination of desolation," spoken of by Daniel the prophet, "was seen standing in the holy place."

In the 10th and following verses, the children of Israel are taught to pray for deliverance, and to encourage themselves by recounting the wonders that their Almighty Protector wrought for them on their exodus from Egypt: and,

as we have seen before, there is reason to expect, from the language of prophecy, the same mighty exertions of the divine power, in their future restoration to their long-lost country.

The prayer particularly marks the acceptable time: when "darkness is at the full," and "the earth" is in a particular manner "the habitation of violence." A description, as the reader will recollect, completely agreeing with other predictions of the awful period of Israel's restoration. "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." ^c

^c Isaiah lx. 2, 3.

PSALM LXXV. ^d

- 1 WE have worshipped thee, O Elohim, we have worshipped thee;
For thy marvels declared thy name to be near. ^e
- 2 When I shall reach the appointed time, ^f
I myself will judge righteously.
- 3 The earth and her inhabitants were melting away,
I sustained her pillars.

SELAH.

- 4 I said unto the boasters, "Boast not;"
And to the wicked, "Set not up your horn."
- 5 Set not up your horn on high,
Nor speak with a stiffened neck: ^g

^d This Psalm is also ascribed to Asaph.

^e "The manifestation of thy glory and power."

^f "Ubi nactus fuero tempus." ROSENMULLER. Comp. Psalm cii. 14.

^g Or, "stretched-out neck."

- 6 For neither from the east, nor from the west,
Nor from the mountain deserts cometh exaltation.
- 7 For Elohim is judge,
He debaseth one, and exalteth another :
- 8 For 'there is' a cup in the hand of Jehovah,
And the wine hath been fully thickened.
- He hath mixed 'it;' and he poureth out therefrom:
Aye, its dregs must be wrung out,
All the wicked of the earth shall drink.
- 9 And as for me I shall be exalted ^h for ever,
I will laud the Elohim of Jacob :
- 10 And I will break all the horns of the wicked:
The horns of the righteous 'one' shall be exalted. ⁱ
- ^h "For מְנִיץ the Septuagint, Bishop Hare, Houbigant, and Bishop Lowth read מְנִיץ but something more mysterious seems to lie under the word מְנִיץ in the mouth of the Messiah; the מְנִיץ of God's people; i. e. *prince or leader*: And I will be chief for ever." HORSLEY.
ⁱ Bishop Horsley considers the last line as an oracular voice.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm can hardly be referred to any other subject, than the final victory of Christ over his enemies, and the establishment of his righteous dominion. In the first verse, he calls upon his waiting people, beholding the remarkable providences of the latter days, to worship God, in anticipation of the speedy manifestation of his glory. "Thy name is near;" that is, says Bishop Horsley, "the second advent approaches."

Our Lord himself has told us respecting the wonders of these last times, which perhaps our eyes have, in part, already beheld: "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: when its branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise, ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door."^j

^j Matthew xxiv. 32, 33.

In the 2d verse the Redeemer looks forward to the appointed period of his reign ; the date of which is revealed in the prophecies, with considerable obscurity, it must be confessed, at present ; but an obscurity which seems fast breaking away before the rising of the day-star.

The 3rd verse probably refers to those dreadful conflicts that are to precede the coming of the Son of Man. "The earth and its inhabitants had long since sunk into nothing, but for my support." Our Lord's words are remarkable : "And except those days were shortened, no flesh should be saved ; but for the elect's sake whom he hath chosen, those days shall be shortened."^k

In the 4th and following verses the proud boasters are checked : for we are to remember that the day of the Lord overtakes the Antichristian powers, in the very moment of their fancied triumphs. The exalting of the horn and the stiffened neck, are the emblems of triumph and exaltation in consequence of victory—taken probably from the habits of certain animals. The triumph of the wicked is short—God in his incarnate Son, appears as Judge and visible Sovereign of the world.

The mixed cup in the hands of this dread Sovereign of the earth, is also the well-known emblem of the distribution of deserved punishment. On this occasion the dregs of the cup of vengeance are to be wrung out. This is clearly the consummation of the dreadful work—these are those judgments symbolized to St. John, when he saw "another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues: for in them is filled up the wrath of God."

To these scenes of judgment, as all the prophets testify, succeeds the everlasting reign of Messiah—"the Righteous One"—"the Holy One of Israel."

^k I believe that this is spoken in reference to the elect remnant who are to be preserved on earth—"in the flesh."

PSALM LXXVI.¹

- 1 ELOHIM is made known in Judah,
His name is great in Israel :
- 2 And in Salem is his tabernacle,
And his dwelling-place in Zion.
- 3 There hath he broken the flashing arrows of the bow,
The shield and the sword, and the armour of war.
SELAH.
- 4 Illustrious art thou,
More magnificent than the hills of the spoiler.
- 5 The stout-hearted fell ;^m they slept their sleep ;
And all the valiant found not their hands !
- 6 At thy rebuke, O Elohim of Jacob,
Both the rider and the horse were cast into a profound sleep.
- 7 Thou, thou art to be feared,
And who can stand before thee when thou art angry ?
- 8 Out of heaven thou makest thy sentence to be heard ;
The earth feareth and is still :
- 9 When Elohim ariseth to judgment,
To save all the meek of the earth.
SELAH.
- 10 Truly the wrath of man praiseth thee, "
The excess of wrath thou restrainest.
- 11 Vow and perform unto Jehovah your Elohim ;
All ye that are about him, bring presents to him that is to be
feared.

¹ This Psalm, also, is ascribed to Asaph.

^m As the *loosened* berries are cast from the blighted olive. Comp. ישל Deut. xxviii. 40. Or, perhaps, we may compare the phrase in Homer,

λύσε δε γνῶα.

ⁿ Lowth, with Houbigant, reads הדיך "Thou breakest or subduest the wrath of man." "Ministereth to thy praise." French and Skinner.

12 He will restrain,^o the spirit of princes,

^p He is feared by the kings of the earth.

^o "Crop the spirit—lower the pride." Dr. LEE. Or, "shall cut off."

^p "Shall be the dread."

EXPOSITION.

We have the opinion of some of the ancient Jews themselves, that this Psalm is to be referred to the transactions of the last days. Many expositors^q have thought of the destruction of the army of Sennacherib, in the reign of Hezekiah, as answering to the predicted catastrophe; but the issue of the contest, and every circumstance as illustrated by other prophecies of the same event, show the former to be the more correct exposition.

The Psalm embraces in its view a season, when a particular manifestation of the divine presence is to be made in the land of Israel, when God is again to inhabit his tabernacle in Zion, and a great and very complete victory is to be obtained over the enemy in its neighbourhood.

Now such, the reader will know, is the burden of every prophecy, respecting the last conflicts, in "the battle of that great day of Almighty God."^r

I will only quote on this occasion the description found in Joel:^s "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get ye down; for the press is full, and the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the

^q Kimchi and Ben Melach. See Gill and Pool.

^r Rev. xvi. 14.

^s Chap. iii. 9, &c.

valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem: and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord shall be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no stranger pass through her any more."

Let this serve as a comment on the Psalm, and prophecy will ever be the best comment on prophecy, till the prediction shall come to pass.

The 4th verse I conceive to be addressed to Zion—"the city of the great King." Jerusalem seems to be contrasted with the other cities, that had in their turns domineered over the world. The hill of the citadel, it will be remembered, was ever wont to be a conspicuous feature of an ancient city, as the Acropolis of Athens, the Capitol of Rome. These were "hills of spoilers," or "of the tearers of the prey"—they had enriched their capitals by the plunder and spoil of the neighbouring countries. But far more eminent will be "the hill of Zion," when the King of Saints shall cause his mighty ones to come down; and, in some sort, fix there the seat of his glorious kingdom: "And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion: the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem."†

The sudden arrest of the adversary, as described in the 5th and 6th verses, may be also illustrated from a passage in Zechariah:‡ "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth, &c. &c."

In the 8th and 9th verses we are plainly told, that not

† Micah iv. 8.

‡ Chap. xiv. 12.

the sword of man, but the sentence of the heavenly Judge, determines this conflict, agreeably to Rev. xix. where THE WORD OF GOD cometh at the head of the armies of heaven: "Out of whose mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Compare with this the close of the Psalm.

PSALM LXXVII. *

- 1 WITH all my voice [†] to Elohim would I call [‡] for help,
With all my voice to Elohim, and he hath heard me.
- 2 In the day of my distress I sought the Lord.
In the night my hand was stretched out without ceasing, [§]
My soul refused to be comforted.
- 3 I would remember Elohim and moan;
I would meditate, and my spirit has sunk within me. ^{||}
SELAH.
- 4 Thou hast held the watchings of mine eyes, ^{||}
I have been disquieted that I could not speak.
- 5 I have thought of the days of old;
I would reflect on the years of ages past; ^{||}

* This Psalm is also ascribed to Asaph. על ידידיון probably marks the tune or music.

[†] See Gesenius.

[‡] Was wont to do so.

[§] See Parkhurst in נָכַר

^{||} Or, "is overwhelmed"—"sinks in despondency."

^{||} So Horsley renders this line: see his note. The second line he trans-

lates, "I made repeated efforts, but I cannot speak: but see Simons on פָּעַם. The ancient interpreters consider the *eyebrows* or *lids* to be meant by שְׂמֵרוֹת "Thou holdest the lids of mine eyes open, I am so troubled that I cannot speak."

^{||} שְׁנֵי עוֹלָמִים Years of perpetuities—years *hiding* themselves in eternal ages.

- 6 I communed * with my heart in the night ;
I would reflect, and my spirit make research.
- 7 Will the Lord cast off for ever,
And will he never more be propitious ?
- 8 Is his tenderness withdrawn † for ever ?
Hath his promise failed for evermore ?
- 9 Hath El ceased to be gracious ?
Hath he in anger shut up his compassion ?
SELAH.
- 10 Then I said, " this is my weakness—^g
There are returns of the right hand of the Most High.
- 11 I will call to remembrance the works of Jah,
Surely I will remember thy wonders of old."
- 12 And I will think upon all thy work,
I will meditate on thy dispensations.
- 13 O Elohim, in the sanctuary ' was ' thy way ; ^h
What El so great as Elohim !
- 14 Thou wast the wonder-working El,
Thou madest known thy strength among the nations ;
- 15 Thou redeemedst thy people with thine arm,
The sons of Jacob and Joseph.
SELAH.
- 16 The waters saw thee, O Elohim,
The waters saw thee, and were moved ;
Ay, the depths trembled.

* " Bishop Lowth thinks כִּנִּיתִי to be a corruption for כִּנְיִיתִי which seems to have been the reading of the LXX. Vulgate, and Syriac." HORSLEY.

† Literally, *collected, gathered in*.
" Exhausted." HORSLEY.

^g " חִלְרִי *agrimonia afficere me* : nominaliter pro *discruciatio* sive *maceratio mei*, vel τὸ ἐνixe rogare meum ; i. e. enixa rogatio mea." SIM.

Lex. Horsley thus :

" Then I said, This affliction of mine
Is the change of the right hand of the Most High."

" But his right hand can help all this,
and change it speedily."

^h To understand the proceedings
of God, we must look to his march
through the desert in his cloud of
glory which rested on his sanctuary.

- 17 The clouds poured down waters,
The skies sent forth a sound,
And thine arrows dispersed themselves abroad.
- 18 The sound of thy thunder was in the whirlwind,
The lightnings illumined the land,
The earth trembled and shook.
- 19 Thy way was in the sea,
And thy paths in the great waters,
Thy footsteps were unknown.
- 20 Thou leddest thy people like a flock,
By the hand of Moses and Aaron.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm is a prayer prepared for Israel in the time of their long captivity, waiting their final restoration.ⁱ Israel after the flesh, indeed, is incapable of offering these petitions, until the spirit of prayer and supplication is poured upon them from on high; but the Israel of God, the Christian churches, "the branches" now growing on "the olive-tree," may offer it in their daily sacrifice. And that, not only for the sake of the Jews, who shall be restored; but because, as we have often been led to remark, connected with that display of almighty power which accomplishes the restoration of Israel, is "the day of the appearing" of Jesus Christ—that day for which the whole church is anxiously waiting, and "that manifestation of the sons of God," for which the "whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain."

When, therefore, we recite this Psalm, we are to think of Israel destitute and disconsolate; and are to anticipate the season when these strong desires after the God of their fathers shall at length animate their breasts. We ought ourselves also to impress our hearts with the same sentiments, both in commiseration of their lost state, and in

ⁱ So thought the Jewish writers Jarchi, Kimchi, and Arama. See Dr. Gill.

longing expectation of that glory which is to be brought to us, "when the Lord whom they seek shall suddenly come to his temple."

The suppliant, we perceive in the first part of the Psalm, begins to feel sensible of his distressed situation, thinking of "the days of old, the years that are past," the former times of his nation's prosperity. Hence an anxious question arises: Shall the present rejection of God's people never terminate, &c.? It is the language of deep despondency, but alleviated at length with a ray of hope.

It is understood from prophecy, that the same display of almighty power which attended the exodus from Egypt, will be once more made in the recovery of this people from all the countries whither the Lord has scattered them. These "returns of the right hand of the Most High" become, accordingly, the object for which his waiting people faint with desire: and while kept in anxious suspense, the suppliant naturally employs himself in recalling to mind what those wonderful exertions of divine power were, which the Spirit of prophecy refers to, as symbols and types of the deliverance which Israel and the whole church of Christ may shortly expect.

The Psalm ends with a beautiful memorial of the exodus, the great wonders in Egypt, and in the field of Zoan, when the sons of Israel and Joseph were delivered from their cruel tyrants. The miraculous passage of the Red Sea is finally alluded to: and how, on the one hand, he burst forth in storms and tempest on the Egyptians, checking their progress, and at length overwhelming them in the depths of the sea: while, on the other hand, he leads his people like a flock in safety, through the unknown paths of the deep.

As a recorded instance of God's miraculous interference on behalf of ancient Israel, this memorial is truly interesting, and well calculated to increase our trust in God: but how much more interesting and animating is it, when considered as a prophetic type of the visible display of the power of Jehovah still to be expected in the consummation of his plans for the final deliverance of his people—a deliverance,

too, with which the object of the highest hopes of the whole catholic church is immediately connected: "O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down!" Compare the song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 43: "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful to his land and to his people."

PSALM LXXVIII.*

- 1 HEAR, O my people, my instruction,
Incline your ear to the words of my mouth.
- 2 I will open my mouth in parable:—
I will cause to be uttered things kept secret from the beginning.
- 3 WHAT we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us,
- 4 We hide not from their children,
Who may tell to a future generation.
- The praises of Jehovah and his power,
And the wonderful works which he did:
- 5 For he established a testimony in Jacob,
And he appointed an instruction in Israel.
- These he gave in charge to our fathers,
To make them known to their children.¹
- 6 So that a future generation may know,
Children that shall be born may arise and tell their children;

* This Psalm, also, is ascribed to Asaph; and the history of ancient Israel, brought down to the accession of David, shows that the Psalm belongs

to that age.

¹ Horsley considers the 5th verse as a parenthesis.

- 7 That they may place their confidence in Elohim,
And may not forget the works of El,
But may keep his commandments ;
- 8 And may not be like their forefathers,
A stubborn and rebellious generation ;
A generation, whose heart was not firm,
Nor their spirit steadfast with El.
- 9 The sons of Ephraim, armed, bearing aloft their bows,
Turned back in the day of battle. ^m
- 10 They kept not the covenant of Elohim,
And refused to walk by his direction.
- 11 And they forgot his doings,
And the wonders that he had showed them.
- 12 He had done wonders in the presence of their fathers,
In the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan :
- 13 He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through ;
The water stood as a solid mass :
- 14 And he led them by a cloud in the day,
And all the night with a light of fire.
- 15 He clave the rocks in the desert,
And gave them drink as from the great deep :
- 16 He brought streams from the hard stone,
And made it descend as rivers of water :
- 17 Yet they sinned against him still,
Provoking the HIGHEST in the desert.
- 18 And they tempted El in their hearts,
Asking food for their lives. "

^m "The expression seems merely proverbial, without allusion to any instance of cowardice in the Ephraimites; it is applicable to any one who breaks

fair promises when he is put to the trial." Idem.

ⁿ Perhaps, "for their appetites."
"For their soul."

19 And they spake concerning Elohim, and said,
"Can El prepare a table in the desert ?

20 Lo ! he smote the rock, and the waters flowed,
And torrents rushed forth !
Is he able, also, to give the nation bread ?
Can he provide flesh for his people ?"

21 Wherefore Jehovah heard, and was wroth.

And a fire was kindled in Jacob,
And anger blazed forth in Israel :

22 Because they believed not in Elohim,
And confided not in his help.

23 And he commanded the clouds above,
And opened the doors of heaven.

24 And he rained upon them manna for food,
And gave unto them the corn of heaven.

25 Each one ate the bread of the affluent, °
He sent them food to the full.

26 He removed the east wind from the heavens,
And gave the south wind in its strength :

27 And he rained flesh upon them like dust,
Even winged fowl as the sand of the sea.

28 And it fell near to their camp,
Round about their habitations.

29 And they ate and were well filled,
And their desire entered into them ;

30 They were not estranged from their desire.

Their food was yet in their mouths,

31 When the anger of Elohim blazed up among them.

° "Nobilium." SIMON. i. e. each one—the poorest among them enjoyed the plenty of the rich.

- And he slew the fattest of them,
And laid prostrate the choice ones in Israel :
- 32 For all this they sinned still,
And believed not for his wondrous works :
- 33 And he consumed their days in vanity,
And their years in trouble.
- 34 When he was slaying them, then they sought him,
And they returned, and inquired earnestly after God :
- 35 And they remembered that Elohim was their rock,
And the Most High El their Redeemer :
- 36 But they deceived with their mouths,
And they lied unto him with their tongues ;
- 37 For their heart was not firm with him,
And they were not steadfast to his covenant.
- 38 But he, being merciful, forgave their sin,
And would not destroy them :

And many a time turned he his anger away,
And would not stir up all his wrath.
- 39 And he remembered that they were flesh,
A breeze that passeth and returneth not again.
- 40 Thus they provoked him in the desert,
They grieved him in the wilderness.
- 41 Again and again ^p they tempted El,
And limited ^q the HOLY ONE of Israel.
- 42 They remembered not his hand,
The day when he delivered them from the enemy ;
- 43 Those his signs that he displayed in Egypt,
And his tokens in the field of Zoan ;
- 44 How he turned their rivers into blood,
And they could not drink of their streams.

^p Horsley.^q Rather, "challenged."

- 45 He sent among them the fly, and it devoured them ;
And the frog, and it destroyed them :
- 46 And he gave their produce to the caterpillar,
And their labours to the locusts :
- 47 And he destroyed their vines with hail,
And their sycamore trees with ice :
- 48 And he gave up their beasts to the hail,
And their cattle to the lightnings.
- 49 He sent upon them the heat of his anger,
Wrath, and indignation, and trouble. ^r
- In sending messengers of evil, ^s
- 50 He prepared the paths for his anger.
He spared not their soul from death,
But gave up their life to the pestilence.
- 51 And he smote all the first-born in Egypt,
The beginning of their strength in the land of Ham :
- 52 But he removed his people like sheep,
And he guided them in the desert like a flock :
- 53 And he led them in safety, and they feared not :
But the sea overwhelmed their enemies :
- 54 And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary,
This mountain that his right hand had gained :
- 55 And he cast out the nations before them,
And divided them an inheritance by line,
And the children of Israel dwelt in their tents :
- 56 But they also tempted and provoked Elohim Most High,
And observed not his testimonies.

^r See Horsley's note.

^s Such is the literal meaning and exact rendering of מלאכי רעים and not *evil angels*, which would be regularly מלאכים רעים. By these *messengers of evils*, I make no doubt

no more is meant than Moses and Aaron, who were charged with denunciations of wrath to Pharaoh, previously to the infliction of all the several plagues.

- 57 And they turned back and were perfidious like their fathers,
And they altered like the relaxed bow. ^t
- 58 They provoked him to anger with their high places,
And moved him to jealousy with their images.
- 59 Elohim heard and was wroth,
And he greatly abhorred Israel :
- 60 And he forsook the tabernacle in Shiloh,
The tent he had pitched among men.
- 61 And he gave their strength into captivity,
And their glory into the hand of the adversary :
- 62 And he delivered up his people to the sword,
And was wroth against his inheritance :
- 63 A fire consumed their young men,
And their virgins had no nuptial song. ^u
- 64 Their priests fell by the sword,
And their widows made no lamentations.
- 65 Then the Lord awaked as from sleep,
As a strong man that had been subdued by wine : ^x
- 66 And he struck his enemies on the hinder parts 'with emerods,'
He fixed upon them a perpetual shame : ^y
- 67 But he rejected the tabernacle of Joseph,
And he chose not the tribe of Ephraim ;
- 68 But he chose the tribe of Judah,
It was the Mount Zion that he loved :
- 69 And he built his sanctuary as the heavens, ^z
Like the earth hath he founded it for ever.

^t "קשת רמייה" *arcus laxationis*,
i. e. *relaxatus, latus*." SIMON.

^u "הוללו (pro הוללו), *laudate*,
celebrata sunt, scil. *epithalamiis*."
Idem.

^x "מתרוגן *quive victum præbet*
(vino), ^a "נשן *prævaluit illi vi-*

num. h. e. *subegit illum vinum*.

^y Kennicott remarks that this
verse alludes to the *emerods* inflicted
on the Philistines, the disgrace of
which they were obliged to perpetuate
by sending golden *emerods* in the ark,
when it returned home to Israel.

^z "As the heights of heaven."

- 70 And he chose David his servant,
And he took him from the sheep-folds :
- 71 He brought him from following the ewes with their young,
To feed Israel his people, and Jacob his inheritance.
- 72 Let him therefore feed them in the integrity of his heart,
And guide them according to the skill of his hands.

EXPOSITION.

There is some probability in the supposition of Dr. Geddes, that this Psalm is a continuation of the preceding. The design of that Psalm, as we have seen, was to raise the expectation, and direct the prayer, of the remnant of Israel and of the whole catholic church, in the latter days, for the second exodus of that highly destined people. That Psalm recorded the wonders in Egypt and at the Red Sea, to animate the hopes of the church as to what may be again expected: this Psalm continues the history of ancient Israel under the miraculous conduct of their heavenly Guide, and warns succeeding generations, from their ingratitude and punishment, "that they fall not after the same example of unbelief."

To professors in all generations the example holds: but I think there is a special regard to a future generation of Jews, whom, under a similar dispensation of providence, the example will in a peculiar manner concern.

Such is my general view of the Psalm: before, however, we enter upon its proper contents, our attention is arrested by the two first verses, which are perfectly distinct from the remainder, and spoken in a different person: they are also quoted in Matt. xiii. 34, 35, as the words of Christ; and they certainly have no immediate relation to what follows: for the Psalm contains no parables, reveals no secrets, nor teaches any mysterious doctrines.

The connexion in which these verses are introduced, must be sought in the close of the former Psalm; there the God of Israel, whose wonders are celebrated, is represented

as leading his people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Now, we are taught in Scripture to link together the mission of Moses and that of our Lord Jesus Christ, especially in the dying prediction of Moses:^a “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken. According to all thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God; neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken all that they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.”

It is this expected Prophet, that speaks in these two verses of the Psalm: “Hear, O my people, my instruction, incline your ear to the words of my mouth.” He describes in the second of these verses, his twofold mode of address: first, he would open his mouth in *parables*, which applies chiefly to the particular mode of instruction which our blessed Lord adopted in his personal ministry among the Jews: “And he spake many things in parables, and without a parable spake he not unto them.” Secondly, he would utter, or, as the word אֲבִיעָדָה may fairly represent, “*He would cause to issue from the breast of the Prophet swollen with the divine Afflatus*, things kept secret from the beginning;” which indicates the last mode of instruction which he should use, speaking in his Prophets and Apostles by his Holy Spirit. Here he would no longer speak parables; but reveal the eternal mysteries of his holy religion. Thus we find St. Paul speaking of his “knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit.”^b “Things kept secret,” well

^a Deut. xviii. 15.

^b Ephesians iii. 4, 5.

expresses the Hebrew word we render in our public translations, "dark sayings." There were, we know, from the beginning, certain truths respecting Christ, his doctrines and kingdom; which, though some obscure intimation of them was given to the church, were still involved in secrecy and deep mystery, so that "many kings and prophets desired to see" them, but were not indulged, that privilege being reserved for Gospel times.

After the Spirit of prophecy has thus anticipated the Saviour's ministry at his first advent, he teaches the Psalmist in his own person, and in the persons of his choral assistants, to gather up the thread of the miraculous history of Israel, and tracing it down to his times, to leave it as a memorial for future ages; especially, as I think, in prospect of a future generation, who should not prove altogether like their forefathers, under a very similar dispensation of providence.

Many conjectures have been made respecting the event referred to in the 9th verse: I collect its meaning from a comparison of the 60th, 67th, and 68th verses. The epocha to which the Psalmist brings down the Israelitish history, was the exaltation of David, and the establishment of the royal and ecclesiastical pre-eminence of Judah and Jerusalem. Previous to that period, Ephraim was in some sort the leading tribe; and the first erection of the tabernacle in Shiloh, whither the tribes went up, gave to the sons of Joseph a kind of metropolitan dignity in Israel. Hence this period is considered as the time of their precedency in the nation. But the children of Ephraim, or Israel under their precedency, had been faithless to their trust, and in the day of trial had not answered to their promise and professions. And to this was the owing low estate, in which the administrations of Samuel and David found the church and people of Israel.

With these observations the Psalm will need no comment. It contains a history of God's dealings with Israel from Moses to David. And it is "written for our admonition, upon whom the *ends of the world are come*."

PSALM LXXIX.

- 1 O ELOHIM! the nations have entered into thine inheritance,
They have defiled thy holy temple,
They have laid Jerusalem in heaps;
- 2 They have exposed the dead bodies of thy servants,
To be food for the birds of the heavens,
The flesh of thy beloved^c for the beasts of the field.
- 3 They have shed their blood like water ;
They lie around Jerusalem, and none doth bury them.
- 4 We are become a reproach to our neighbours,
A scorn and derision to them that are about us.
- 5 How long, O Jehovah, wilt thou still be always angry?
Shall thy jealousy burn like fire ?
- 6 Pour out thy wrath upon the nations that know thee not,
And upon the kingdoms that call not upon thy name ;
- 7 For they have devoured Jacob,
And have laid waste his dwelling.
- 8 Remember not against us former iniquities ;
Soon let thy pity reach us, for we are brought very low.
- 9 Help us, O Elohim of our salvation,
For the glory of thy name :

And deliver us, and blot out our sin for thy name's sake.
- 10 Why should the nations say, Where is their Elohim ?

He shall be known among the nations in our sight,
In avenging the blood of thy servants that hath been shed.
- 11 The sigh of the prisoner shall come before thee,
In the greatness of thy power wilt thou save the children of
death ;

^c " The objects of loving-kindness."

12 And wilt return to our neighbours seven-fold into their
bosoms,
The reproaches wherewith they have reproached thee, O
Lord.

But we, we are thy people and the sheep of thy pasture,
We will celebrate thee for ever,
From age to age will we record thy praise.

EXPOSITION.

If this Psalm is to be ascribed to the same Asaph as the former, the destruction it describes must be prophetic, as no such disaster befel the holy city in the reign of David. Both our copies and the Targum ascribe it to the same person; and though the Spirit of prophecy might have had a double meaning, comprehending the Babylonian, as well as the Roman captivity, yet the latter must have been chiefly in his view.

The Roman destruction was far more murderous in its issue than the Babylonian, and therefore better suited to the opening of the Psalm. The seventeen centuries of the latter agree much better than the seventy years of the former, with the suppliant's complaint of so long protracted anger.

In the close of the Psalm the Holy Advocate, that utters the cry of God's elect calling for vengeance, plainly forebodes that same catastrophe which is so often in the Spirit's view in these mysterious songs. And the eternal song of praise, which is henceforth to be offered to the great Deliverer, can agree with nothing but the last grand period of Israel's felicity, when "sorrow and sighing shall be no more," and God shall wipe away the reproach of his people from off all the earth.

PSALM LXXX.^d

- 1 SHEPHERD of Israel, give ear ;
 Thou that ledest Joseph like a flock ;
 Thou that dwellest between the cherubim,^e shine forth,
- 2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
 Raise up thy mighty power,
 And come and save us.
- 3 O Elohim, restore us,
 And cast the light of thy countenance upon us, and we shall
 be saved.
- 4 Jehovah, Elohim, Sabaoth,
 How long wilt thou burn in anger against the prayer of thy
 people ?
- 5 Thou hast fed them with the bread of weeping,
 And hast measured them out tears to drink.^f
- 6 Thou hast made us a contention to our neighbours,
 And our enemies have made sport of us among them.
- 7 O Elohim, Sabaoth, restore us,
 And cast the light of thy countenance upon us, and we
 shall be saved.
- 8 Thou removedst a vine out of Egypt,
 Thou didst cast out the nations to plant it ;
- 9 Thou didst prepare before it that it might take root,
 That its roots might fill the land.
- 10 The mountains were covered with its shade,
 And the cedars of El with its tendrils :
- 11 It sent forth its branches into the sea,
 And its suckers unto the river.

^d This Psalm is ascribed to Asaph.
 Compare, for the remainder of the
 title, Psalms XLV. and XL.

^e Or, "inhabitest the cherubim."

^f "And given them a threefold
 measure of tears."

- 12 Why hast thou broken down its fences,
So that all that pass by have plucked it ?
- 13 The wild boar from the wood hath devoured it,^g
And the beasts of the field have fed upon it.
- 14 O Elohim, Sabaoth, return, we pray ;
Look down from heaven and see,
- 15 And visit this vine,
And protect that which thy right hand planted.
- 16 ^hBurn with fire the spoiler,ⁱ
Let them perish at the rebuke of thy countenance ;
- 17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand,
On the son of man whom thou hast made strong for thee.
- 18 Then shall we not go back from thee ;
Thou shalt quicken us, and we shall call upon thy name.
- 19 Jehovah, Elohim, Sabaoth, restore us,
Cast the light of thy countenance, and we shall be saved.

^g " כרסם כרסם *toto ore valide*
momorait." SIMON.

^h ועל בן אמצרה לך "Bi-
shop Hare seems to have judged right
in rejecting this line as a misplaced

anticipation of the latter clause of the
17th verse." HORSLEY.

ⁱ "They the spoilers of the vine-
yard." Idem. Perhaps the word
should be rendered the *refuse* or *rub-
bish*.

EXPOSITION.

Our Bibles ascribe this Psalm to Asaph. It suits not, indeed, the history of his times ; hence various conjectures have been offered as to its time and author. I believe, that, like the former, it is prophetic ; in fact, an anticipated prayer for the restoration of Israel.

There is a difficulty in the proem of the Psalm, that perhaps has not been satisfactorily obviated : why the three tribes, Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, are particularly specified. If we were permitted to read in the 2d verse differently,^k all would be clear :

^k הופיעה instead of הופיע

Shepherd of Israel, give ear,
 Thou that leddest Joseph like a flock,
 'Who' sitting between the cherubim, didst shine forth
 Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh.

These three tribes, the reader will learn from the second chapter of the book of Numbers, in the order of the march of the tribes of Israel through the desert, had their appointed station immediately after the ark, so that when the splendour of the divine presence shone forth, it shone before these tribes.

Admitting, however, the reading in the text to be correct, and there is no reason to suspect it, to perceive the propriety of the allusion, we must suppose, in some future restoration, the same order of march to be observed. It is not for us to say that this will not be the case, although in the gathering of Israel from all lands it is difficult to be supposed. But, perhaps, there is a different cause for the designation of these particular tribes. We know from other prophecies, that it is a visible display of the DIVINE PRESENCE, which ends the controversy of Zion, and brings the spoilers of Israel to their destined destruction. Now it will be found, on a comparison of these predictions, that the localities of the divine appearance, the spots where his vengeance overtakes his enemies, are all within the boundaries of the tribes here mentioned, Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh.

The territory of these tribes will be seen, by the map, to extend from sea to sea, occupying all the country north of Jerusalem: and here we find *Megiddo*, the *Mount of Olives*, and *Azal*,¹ and the *valley of Jehoshaphat*. This is the district plainly marked out as the scene of the last mighty conflict: here the spoiler meets his fate, and is burnt with fire^m—here all the destroyers of the Lord's vineyard perish at the rebuke of his countenance, "when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth."

The instrument of this vengeance is pointed out in the 17th verse: and who can be "the man of God's right hand,"

¹ Zech. xiv.

^m Rev. xix.

except he, to whom it was said in the CXth Psalm, "Sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool."—"The Son of Man," we know, was the peculiar title of Jesus Christ; and in that character he himself tells us he is to judge the quick and dead at his appearing. "THE FATHER judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to THE SON:"—"He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, *because* he is the *Son of Man*."ⁿ

ⁿ John v.

PSALM LXXXI.^o

- 1 SING aloud unto Elohim our strength,
Raise the shout of joy unto the Elohim of Jacob.
- 2 Take the psaltery and bring the timbrel,
The delightful harp and the lute.
- 3 Blow the trumpet on the new moon,^p
On the full, on each day of our feast :
- 4 For this is an ordinance for Israel,
A decree of the Elohim of Jacob.
- 5 He ordained it a statute in Joseph,
When he came up from the land of Egypt.
- 6 I heard a language that I approved not,
I removed his shoulder from the burden,
His hands were released from the basket.

^o This Psalm is ascribed to Asaph. Bishop Horsley observes, "It is certainly older than the time of David; for the use of Joseph's name, in the 5th verse, as the name of the whole nation, shows that it was composed before Judah became the principal tribe, while the place of worship was

in the tribe of Ephraim, that is among Joseph's descendants." This, however, is not conclusive, as a Psalm, whenever composed, referring to the events of those times, might use the same distinctions.

^p "Rather on the first of the new moon." See Numbers x. 10.

- 7 In distress thou calledst upon me to deliver thee ;
I answered thee from the secret place of thunder,
I proved thee at the waters of Meribah.
SELAH.
- 8 Hear, O my people, for I will testify to thee,
O Israel, if thou wilt obey my voice :
- 9 Let there be no strange El in thee,
Neither worship ye any unknown El.
- 10 I am Jehovah your Elohim,
Who brought thee from the land of Egypt ;
Thy mouth was opened, but I filled it.
- 11 But my people hearkened not to my voice,
And Israel would not obey me ;
- 12 And I gave them up to the desires of their heart,
That they might walk after their own counsels.
- 13 Oh, had my people hearkened unto me,
Would Israel have walked in my ways,
- 14 Soon would I have laid low their enemies,
And turned my hand against their adversaries.
- 15 The haters of Jehovah should have proved liars concerning
him,
But their time should have been for ever :
- 16 And I would have fed him with the finest of the wheat ;
I would have filled thee with honey from the rock.

EXPOSITION.

The Psalm before us begins by an invocation of the powers of music to sound the praises of Jehovah. All the instruments proper for the occasion which had been invented in those times, were to be employed. Especially, at the appointed seasons, the silver trumpets of the sanctuary are

to be sounded, for so it had pleased God to ordain: "Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn feasts, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifice of your peace-offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God."^q

Other instruments of music, it appears, were added to the trumpets in the time of David: "And when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt-offering was finished."^r

The original divine institution of instrumental music in the public worship of God, cannot be disputed. I am aware of the difference of opinion on this subject; but, for my own part, I think the spirit of the injunction passes on to the worship of the Christian church. The institution was certainly never formally abolished: nor is there in the nature of things, any reason why the sacrifice of praise under the New Testament dispensation, should want this accompaniment. Whatever effect music had on ancient ears, it doubtless has on men of the present day; and the same moral effect upon their affections. We may understand by the memorial mentioned in the institution, that which recalls to recollection; and we are all sensible of the effect of a solemn tune that has been associated with the praises of God, and has been accustomed to celebrate the mercies of redemption.

The Psalm itself which follows this exordium, glances upon the chief heads of the Israelitish story, from the circumstances of which, admonitions are drawn for the instruction of that people and of the Catholic church in all ages. The church of God heard a strange language in Egypt, the tumultuous noise of an idolatrous multitude—these were then their cruel taskmasters—they were compelled to hear it, however offensive to their ears. But Jehovah delivered

^q Numbers x. 10.

^r 2 Chron. xxix. 28.

them from the house of bondage—and in all their troubles he answered their cry. He spake to them from the secret place of thunder, referring, as some think, to the awful circumstances of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai: but more probably, to the manner in which the distress of the people was relieved, when the Egyptians pursued them to the Red Sea.

Notwithstanding these wonders, the affair at Meribah soon discovered how little was the faith of his redeemed people. Ah! in the spiritual journey of the Israel of God through the wilderness of this world, how many Meribahs are there! and but for that better covenant, who would ever reach the promised land of the heavenly Canaan?

There next follows a testimony of the Lord, which particularly concerns his ancient people, and speaks to their present circumstances, given up to the desires of their heart, to their own counsels. Yet still a promise awaits them of a repetition of the scenes of their former mercies, when “Israel shall turn unto the Lord.”

And thus the daily sacrifice of praise in the Christian church, as often as the solemn sound is heard, is still a memorial before the Lord for Israel. And let this be our encouragement when we recite or chaunt this Psalm before the Lord: “Israel hath not stumbled, that they should fall. God forbid: but rather, through their fall, salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. And if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?”^s

^s Romans xi. 11.

PSALM LXXXII.¹

1 ELOHIM standing up^a in the assembly of El,
In the midst of Elohim he pronounceth judgment.*

2 How long will ye judge unjustly,^y
And accept the persons of the wicked?

SELAH.

3 Do justice to the poor and destitute,
Defend the right of the humbled and depressed :

4 Rescue the poor and helpless,
Deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

5 They take no notice, neither do they understand ;
They walk on in darkness :
All the foundations of the earth are displaced !

6 I myself have said, "Ye are Elohim,
And ye are all the Sons of the Highest ;"

7 Notwithstanding, ye shall die as men,
And fall as one of the princes !

8 Arise, O Elohim, judge the earth,
For it is thou that shalt inherit^z all nations.

¹ A Psalm of Asaph.

^a Or, "presiding in."

^z This is agreeable to the division
of the lines proposed by Horsley. For
see Simon.

^y "Patronize the oppressor?"—

HORSLEY.

^z "Take possession of the supreme
authority in all nations."

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley describes the subject of this Psalm to be, "God's just judgment foretold, upon the unjust judges of our Lord." I conceive it has a more general reference to the perversion of the divine institutions of the Jewish church and kingdom, by their administrators the Levitical priests

and magistrates. No doubt the meaning is to be extended to the perversion of the same authorities in Christian churches and states; but for the strict application of the language of the Psalm, we must confine our reference to these judges of Israel.

The Levitical priests and magistrates were typical Christs and typical Gods.^a Their appointment was immediately from God—obedience to their decrees was exacted by divine authority; and but for the apostacy of the priests and of the people, his oracle had continued to decide for them in all cases of difficulty.

“I said ye are gods, &c.” The Jewish priests and judges, as we have just seen, bore the title of Elohim;—“children of the Highest,” in the Hebrew phraseology, means the same thing as Elohim. Such they were in their official capacity only, as typical of HIM THAT WAS TO COME. Their dying like men and like other princes, proved that they were not truly “gods” or “sons of the Highest:” yet as our Lord argues with the Jews from this Psalm, “If he call them God to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken;” and if, at the same time, the thing asserted was evidently not true of the typical subjects of the divine declaration themselves; then the Scripture can alone remain unbroken by the antitype’s being the TRUE God, and really the SON OF THE HIGHEST. This is evidently the force of the argument drawn from this passage by our divine Master, when he would rebut the charge of blasphemy brought against him by the Jews, “because he said he was the Son of God;”—“making himself,” as they rightly understood the nature of the claim, “equal with God.”

The Psalm, therefore, contemplating the perversion and violation of all the divine institutions of the priesthood and magistracy among men, prays for the speedy appearance of that King who shall reign in righteousness, and redress all the wrongs of the injured and the persecuted: he is addressed as “the God that shall arise and inherit all nations.”

Now, the inheritor of all nations is unquestionably the Messiah—he is then truly Elohim, and truly the Son of the Most High.

He will appear, we know from other Scriptures, in an especial manner, as an avenger to those who have been unfaithful in their discharge of the high offices of ministers of justice and religion: “But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand, when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, and they shall offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness.”

PSALM LXXXIII.^b

- 1 O ELOHIM, be not silent;
Turn not away, refuse not to speak, O El.^c
- 2 For, lo! thine enemies are rising tumultuously,
And they that hate thee lift up their heads;
- 3 They craftily consult against thy people,
And take counsel against thy hidden ones:^d
- 4 They have said, Come and let us cut them off from being a nation,
And let the name of Israel be no more remembered.
- 5 They have laid their plans with one accord,
They have made a covenant against thee.
- 6 The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,
Moab and the Hagarenes;
- 7 Gebal and Ammon and Amalek;
The Philistines, with the inhabitants of Tyre:

^b This is the last of the Psalms ascribed to Asaph.

^c Literally, “Turn not away in silence, so as not to speak, nor seem

to notice.”

^d “Those whom thou dost protect,” or “conceal as treasure.”

- 8 Assur also has joined with them,
And lendeth^e his arm to the children of Lot.

SELAH.

- 9 Treat them as Midian, as Sisera,
As Jabin at the torrent of Kishon.
- 10 They perished at En-Dor,
And became dung for the soil :
- 11 Make their chiefs^f like Oreb and Zeeb,
And all their princes^g like Zeba and Zalmunna ;
- 12 They who have said, We will take possession
Of these habitations of Elohim.
- 13 O Elohim, make them like the thistle-down,
Like the stubble before the wind :
- 14 As fire burneth in the forest,
And as the flame blazeth on the mountains,
- 15 So wilt thou pursue them with thy tempest,
And drive them away with thy storm.
- 16 Thou wilt fill their countenances with shame,
So that ' men ' shall seek thy name, O Jehovah.^h
- 17 They shall be confounded and put to confusion for ever,
They shall be put to shame and perish ;
- 18 And it shall be known that THOU, whose name is Jehovah,
Art alone the highest over all the earth.

^e Or, "has become the arm of."

^f Or, "their noble ones."

^g Or, "all their anointed."

^h "They, that is, not those who

are put to shame ; for they perish ; but others, men in general : so in the last verse, "And they shall know." So Dr. Gill.

EXPOSITION.

The general subject of this Psalm is a confederacy of all the neighbouring nations against Israel, assisted by a still mightier foe at a distance: for the ten nations mentioned, to whom the Assyrian lends his arm, will be found to describe

the entire boundary of the Holy Land, from its southernmost border in Philistia, to the spot where it again reaches the sea on the north, in the neighbourhood of Tyre. We are pretty sure that no such combination of the surrounding nations took place in the age of David and Asaph: and though some events in the Jewish history have been supposed to be in the view of the Spirit of prophecy, as the confederacy in the days of Jehoshaphat,ⁱ and that in the time of Judas Maccabeus:^k yet neither of these wars answered, in all its circumstances, to the combination and destruction portrayed in the Psalm before us: and especially the results of these contests were widely different from the result of this wonderful victory of the Most High, which appears to be nothing short of the universal and everlasting display of the divine power.

These considerations, no doubt, led a Jewish writer to understand the Psalm before us of the war of Gog and Magog.¹ We need not hesitate, therefore, to conclude that this Psalm, like many others that we have already considered, contemplates the great and final victory over the enemies of Israel, in "the battle of the great day of Almighty God." This grand crisis, we have before discovered from the word of prophecy, is to be brought about in a struggle of certain powers of the earth, in the land of Canaan, at or after the restoration of the Jews.

To Israel the conflict appears as though all the neighbouring nations had conspired together to surround them on all sides and destroy them: while the Assyrian, a frequent appellation of Antichrist, being his predecessor in universal empire, and the grand mortal foe of the church, is abetting their schemes and coming to their assistance. To this well agrees the description in Ezekiel; only the Spirit there enlarges, as it were, the field of view, and shows us not the immediate borderers alone conspiring against Israel, but all surrounding nations under the symbolical Gog; and the same combination of all the nations against Jerusalem, is more than once intimated in the minor Prophets: to this,

ⁱ 2 Chron. xx. 1.

^k See 1 Maccab. chap. v.

¹ R. Obadiah. See Dr. Gill. See Ezekiel, xxxviii. and xxxix.

also, correspond the events of the sixth vial in the Revelation; when "the kings of the earth and of the whole world are gathered to the battle of the great day of Almighty God"—and are gathered together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

Guided by these helps, I think we arrive at a more clear and literal exposition of the Psalmist's language, we discover that the allusion which is made to two particular victories recorded in the ancient history of Israel, that of Barak over the Canaanites, and that of Gideon over the Midianites, is not merely accidental, nor are these victories mentioned as common examples of miraculous assistance vouchsafed to Israel over their foes; for then it might well be asked, why are these two victories selected in particular, and in preference to other divine interpositions of greater moment, and which more usually serve the sacred writers for images and comparisons?

But the allusion to these particular contests of former times, is, because they happened upon that ominous spot where the final catastrophe is to take place. "The kings of Canaan fought in Taanach by the waters of *Megiddo*; the river Kishon." "The river of victories" or "of battles" (for so קְרוֹמִיִּם ought to be translated, Judges v.) "swept them away." En-Dor, Taanach, and Megiddo were districts containing several towns pertaining to Manasseh in Issachar and in Asher, as appears from Joshua xvii. 11: and here, in the same neighbourhood, "in the valley of Jezreel,"^m we find Midian encamped, when the Spirit of the Lord stirred up Gideon to accomplish the deliverance of Israel."

At the torrent of Kishon, therefore—"the torrent of victories"—the last great combination of the enemies of God and of his people are to perish, and become like dung for the soil at En-Dor.

In the 12th verse the idle boast of the enemy is represented, and the following verse affords a striking exhibition of the nothingness of combined nations before the Almighty—"like the thistle-down"—"like the stubble before the

^m Judges, vi. 33.

wind." The destruction is complete, they are consumed in the day of the Lord's anger—"a day that shall burn as an oven." The enemy is put to a perpetual shame; and the result of this victory, as pointed out by the word of prophecy, is a result which attends no victory besides this of "the battle of the great day of Almighty God."—"The residue of men are to seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."^a

^a Acts, xv. 17. Comp. Zech. xiv. and Amos, ix. 11.

PSALM LXXXIV.^o

- 1 How lovely are thy tabernacles,
Jehovah Sabaoth:
- 2 My soul hath longed and hath even fainted
For the courts of Jehovah.
- My heart and my flesh shall sing aloud for joy
Before the living El,
- 3 —As the sparrow^p that hath reached her house, and the turtle^q
her nest,
Where she had placed her young,—
- ‘Before’ thy altars, O Jehovah Sabaoth,
My king and my Elohim.

^o This Psalm is ascribed to the sons of Korah; that is, was either given to them immediately by the inspiration of the Spirit, or provided for them through the instrumentality of some prophet. The sons of Korah, it appears from 1 Chron. ix. 19, were

appointed to keep the gates of the tabernacle.

^p Or, "aye, the bird hath reached."
צָפֹרֶק signifies birds in general.

^q תַּרְטוּר Turtur ex mente veterum interpretum. LXX. Syr. Chald. and Vulg.

4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house,

They are for ever praising thee.^r

SELAH.

5 Blessed the men that are resorting^a to thee,

The steep ascents in their view,^t

6 Passing through the valley of Baca,^u

They shall drink^z of the well ;

And they shall journey 'to' the pools 'where' the rain is hidden,

From valley to valley :^y

7 Each shall appear before Elohim in Zion,

Jehovah, Elohim, Sabaoth.

8 Harken to my prayer, give ear,

O Elohim of Jacob.

SELAH.

9 Regard, O Elohim, our shield ; and look on the face of thine

Anointed ;

Truly a day in thy courts is better than a thousand.

10 I had rather abide at the threshold of the house of Elohim,

Than dwell^z in the tents of wickedness.

11 Truly Jehovah is a sun and a shield ;

Elohim will give grace and glory :

Jehovah will withhold no good from them

That walk in sincerity.

12 O Jehovah Sabaoth, most blessed is the man

That hath trusted in thee.

^r "Those who answer to the symbol of the cherubim."

^a Literally, "Flight or refuge:" from עָרָו *fugere, confugere*, whence מַעֲוֹן *asylum*.

^t Literally, "The steeps are in their hearts." The steep ascents on which the tabernacle stood. Horsley renders, "They are bent on climbing the steep ascents." Perhaps the סִלּוֹת were more properly the *raised causeways* or stairs leading up to Mount Zion, or all through the mountainous

country on the road to Jerusalem.

^u "Valley of weeping—rugged or desolate."

^z I conjecture יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה is put for יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה. See Psalm lxxviii. 44. Comp. Houbigant.

^y So Michaelis. — "The country round about Jerusalem is very mountainous, so that the resting-places for travellers were in the valleys; the meaning is, "from stage to stage." KENNICOTT.

^z Or, "be a guest."

EXPOSITION.

The exposition of this Psalm is certainly attended with some difficulties, though there is plainly a connexion with the foregoing.^a My conception of it is, that the first three verses are spoken by the Psalmist in the character of a restored Israelite—or rather of the great Captain of our salvation, who hath already led some of his victorious bands to the holy mountains, and expresses his and their joy on the occasion. It was the joy set before him in the days of his flesh, and it was the common hope of his people, that they should one day appear before God in Zion. For this they longed and even fainted.^b

The comparison in the 3d verse, of the bird singing for joy when she arrives at her nest, is exceedingly beautiful, and will remind us of St. Paul's remark: "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord," our true and better home; "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

The 4th verse pronounces them blessed that are arrived at this happy place; and though the language applies to all "that are fallen asleep in Jesus;" yet I think the prophecy has principally in its view the day when God shall gather to him the outcasts of Israel in their restored tabernacles on the heights of Jerusalem: an event, as we have frequently seen from the glimmering of the prophetic lamp, closely connected with the gathering of the saints into the kingdom of Messiah, and the union of "the whole family in heaven and earth."

The Advocate next pronounces a blessing on those that are journeying towards the holy place. They are described as finding a supply of water in all the dreary solitudes of their march, and as all arriving safe to behold their God in Zion. As the Prophet Isaiah describes the return of the same captives: "They thirsted not when he led them

^a See Buxtorf in Pool.

^b Compare first Psalm of Second Book: "As the hart panteth," &c.

through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the water gushed out.”—“The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”

From the 8th verse we have a prayer of the church, supplicating for the fulfilment of these glorious prospects, and that it would please Jehovah to accept the anointed Redeemer's person and prayer—expressing her strong desire to reach the happy place. The two last verses may be considered as Messiah's encouraging address to his praying people, who are faithful to his covenant and put their trust in Jehovah. The application of this beautiful Psalm to a Christian's love of public worship, and his heart-felt delight in the ordinances of the Gospel church, will have escaped no one who “knoweth the joyful sound.”

PSALM LXXXV.^c

1 THOU hast been gracious, O Jehovah, to thy land;
Thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob;

2 Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people,
And covered all their sins.

SELAH.

3 Thou hast withdrawn all thy displeasure,
And hast turned back the fierceness of thy wrath.

4 Turn us, O Elohim of our salvation,
Cause thine anger towards us to cease.

5 Art thou angry with us for ever?
Dost thou extend thy wrath to all generations?

^c This Psalm also is ascribed to the sons of Korah.

- 6 Is it not thou that wast again to quicken us,
That with thy people they may rejoice in thee?
- 7 Show us, Jehovah, thy tender love,
Grant unto us thy salvation.
- 8 I will listen what the El will say.
—Jehovah will assuredly speak peace,^d
Unto his people and unto his beloved ;
And they shall wait no more.^e
- 9 Aye, truly near to them that fear him is his^f salvation.
His^g glory to rest on our land.
- 10 Kindness and truth have met each other,
Righteousness and peace have kissed.
- 11 Truth shall spring up from the earth,
For righteousness has looked down from heaven :
- 12 And Jehovah will give the blessing,
And our land will yield her increase.
- 13 Righteousness will go before him,
And direct his steps^h in the way.

^d Or reading בִּי for יִי "will speak by me."

^e Or, "They shall not return again to long waiting." בְּסֵל not only means *stultitia*, but also *cunctatio*,

tardatio, hinc *expectatio spes*." See Simon.

^f Syriac.

^g Syriac.

^h Or, "when he shall set his steps."

EXPOSITION.

The Psalm before us, rendered in the most obvious and literal manner, with respect to the tenses of the verbs, presents us in the three first verses with the thanksgiving of a people that have already been the objects of regard, have received complete forgiveness, and restoration to the favour of God. And there follows, as evidently, in the two next verses, the earnest supplication of another set of worshippers, at that time suffering under the tokens of the divine displeasure, for a similar restoration and revival.

Who the objects are, for whom the *thanksgiving* is offered, is clearly expressed: Jacob and THE LAND — “the glory of all lands,” “the land of promise.” This can refer to nothing but that burden of so many of these sacred songs, the restoration of the Jews to the land of Canaan in the last days.

Who then are these other supphants, still waiting for favour and prosperity? I think we need not hesitate to say, they are “the remnant whom the Lord will spare among the Gentiles, in the time of the great tribulation, when, except those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved.”

I believe I have translated the 6th verse with correctness, the transition of person in this manner being not uncommon in the Hebrew poetry: “Wilt thou not again quicken *us*, that *these* may rejoice with thy people?” It is the intercession of the Mediator: that the restoration of the Jews will be attended with such a consequence to the Gentile nations, is expressly revealed. St. Paul clearly states this fact: “For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”ⁱ And the receiving of the outcast Jews is connected, as appears from a subsequent verse,^k with the fulfilment of a prophecy in Isaiah: “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

If we consult this prophecy,^l we shall find it again clearly stated, that when “the glory of the Lord is risen upon Zion,” “darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the peoples;” “and the Gentiles are to come to the light of Zion, and kings to the brightness of her rising.” With this agrees the close of the song of Moses: “Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and he will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful to his land and to his people.”^m

The 8th verse is evidently the soliloquy of the priest who had consulted the oracle, and is waiting for the divine response: for we are generally to understand the petitions of

ⁱ Rom. xi. 15. ^k Ver. 26. ^l Isaiah, lix. 20; xli. &c. ^m Deut. xxxii. 43.

the church, and of every part of it, as offered by the Mediator and "High Priest of our profession."

A favourable answer is vouchsafed: "Peace" is spoken both to the ancient people the Jews, and to the objects of grace among the Gentiles, that is, that remnant of the nations which are spared, and are made partakers in the prosperity of restored Israel. And it is remarkable that we have the suffrage of a celebrated Jewish writer, Kimchi, to understand the word rendered "Beloved" in this place, "of the godly among the Gentiles, as distinguished from the Lord's people, the Jews."^a

The five last verses of the Psalm describe the happy scenes that follow, in the reign of Messiah: his saints, a kind of firstfruits of his creatures, have entered into his glory. "His kingdom comes, his will is done on earth as it is in heaven." And we may illustrate the contents of these verses by the larger description in the LXXII^d Psalm: "Thou grantest thy judgments unto the king, and thy righteousness unto the king's son," &c. &c.

^a חסידיו See Dr. Gill.

PSALM LXXXVI.^o

- 1 INCLINE, Jehovah, thine ear, and answer me,
For I am afflicted and helpless :
- 2 Keep my soul, for I am thy beloved ;^p
Save thy servant, for thou art my Elohim.
- 3 Be gracious to me, O Lord, that trusteth in thee ;
For to thee do I call all the day long.
- 4 O gladden the soul of thy servant ;
For unto thee, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

^o This Psalm is entitled "A Prayer of David."

^p "An object of thy grace, or loving kindness."

- 5 For thou, Lord, art good and indulgent,
And great in tenderness to all that call upon thee.
- 6 Give ear, O Jehovah, to my prayer,
And attend to the voice of my supplications ;
- 7 In the day of my distress I will call on thee, for thou wilt
answer me.
- 8 There is none like thee among the Elohim, O Lord,
Neither are there any works like thy works.
- 9 All nations that thou hast made shall come
And worship before thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name :
- 10 For thou art great, and hast done wonderful things ;
Thou thyself art Elohim alone.
- 11 Teach me, O Jehovah, thy way, I would walk in thy truth :
My heart is united to fear thy name.^a
- 12 I will praise thee, O Lord my Elohim, with my whole heart,
And I will glorify thy name for ever :
- 13 For thy tender love hath been great to me,
And thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.
- 14 O Elohim, the proud rose up against me,
And the assembly of the terrible sought after my soul,
But they set not thee before them :
- 15 For thou, Lord, art an Elohim compassionate and gracious,
Slow to anger, and plenteous in tenderness and truth.
- 16 Turn to me and be gracious,
Vouchsafe thy strength to thy servant ;
Ay, save the son of thine handmaid.^r
- Give me a token for good,
- 17 That they who hate me may see and be ashamed,
Because thou, Jehovah, hast helped me and comforted me.

^a Or, with Horsley, "My heart is united to praise thy name."—"The versions with Muis and others, deriving this verb יִרְדָּךְ from יִרְדָּךְ render it, 'My heart shall rejoice in fearing thy name.' Geddes renders, 'Direct

my heart to fear thy name.'" BOOTHROYD.

^r "Or, the son of thy truth; i. e. thy true son. Comp. Ps. CXVI. ver. 16." HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm appears to be one of those which may be applied personally to our blessed Saviour, though much seems to be spoken respecting his mystical body. As in many of the former Psalms, the spirit of prophecy portrays him in the days of his humiliation, offering his strong cries and entreaties to Him that is able to save him from death: here, again, we contemplate in our divine Master, an example instructing us how, relying on his mercy, we should trust in God in the hour of distress.

The 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th verses I conceive to be addressed to the afflicted Suppliant either by the oracular voice, or by the celestial witnesses of his passion. The address extols the Redeemer, and sets before him the honours of his everlasting kingdom—all, the reward of his achievements, and the fruit of the travail of his soul: this doubtless, as we have remarked on former occasions, was the joy set before the Saviour, for which he “endured the cross, despising the shame.”

In the 11th verse the humble prayer is resumed. The Redeemer prays for directions that he may fully accomplish all the will of his heavenly Father: “If this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.”

The 12th, 13th, and 14th verses may be considered as the thanksgiving of the rising Saviour, recounting the tender love of our heavenly Father, which he had experienced while he was paying the utmost penalty of our transgressions, and had sunk into the low abode of the dead: there, as has been intimated before, the proud hosts of rebellious spirits considered his soul as their prey: but “through death he destroys death, and him that had the power of death,” and rises triumphant from the dead—all which, in the 15th verse, he ascribes to the compassion and goodness of God.

The two last verses are a prayer for future favour and prosperity, and are offered by our heavenly Advocate on behalf of his mystical body, the church; and the answer of

this prayer, whenever it shall be vouchsafed, will bring the final overthrow of all the enemies of the cause of Christ, and the eternal consolation of all his waiting people.

PSALM LXXXVII.^s

- 1 His foundations¹ are on the holy hills;
2 Jehovah hath loved the gates of Zion above all.

The dwellings of Jacob are filled with glory :

- 3 Thou art called, "The city of the Elohim."²

SELAH.

- 4 I will cause Egypt and Babylon to record :
See Philistia also among them that acknowledge me,
Tyre, also, with Ethiopia.

"HE³ hath been brought forth there ;"

- 5 Ay, every one shall declare of Zion,
"HE hath been brought forth there ; and he will establish
her."

- 6 The Highest, Jehovah, shall inscribe it in the scriptures of
the nations,

"HE hath been brought forth there !"⁴

SELAH.

¹ This Psalm is ascribed to the Sons of Korah.

² "His buildings;" the buildings of God. Or, "its foundations."

³ Bishop Horsley translates differently : "The glories of the desert are in thee." He explains it, "The Schechinah which appeared upon Sinai, and marshalled the army of the Israelites upon their journey through the wilderness, has now fixed its residence in thee, O city of God. Kennicott renders, 'Glorious things doth he

speak of thee;' &c."

⁴ Or, "this man."

⁵ "Every one shall confess, to the honour of the Israelites, that the Saviour was a native Jew ; and that God shall provide that this circumstance shall be particularly recorded in the *scriptures of the peoples* ; the historical books of the New Testament, called the Scriptures of the peoples, as intended for the instruction of the whole world, &c." HORSLEY.

7 And the singers, with the musicians,
All sing responsively² concerning thee.^a

² Like the choirs of those who lead the choral song.

^a "Dimock reads with Durell *בְּחִלְלִים* or rather *בְּחִלְלִים* and *מְעִנִי* instead of *מְעִנִי* from *עֲנֵה* *cecinit*. Admitting the readings proposed, we may render, 'And the singers, with the musicians, shall sing

responsively concerning thee.'" *Богословъ*. Horsley, reading with the Syriac *מְעִנִי* renders these lines, "And all that were afflicted in thee shall sing like those that keep a festival." The former, upon the whole, I have preferred.

EXPOSITION.

The uncertainty that rests upon the interpretation of particular expressions in this Psalm must be acknowledged. Bishop Horsley has, perhaps, correctly given its general title, "Salvation is of the Jews." The first two verses seem to be addressed to Zion, as the chosen residence of God: Compare Psalm LXVIII. 16;—"This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in: yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever."

By the dwellings of Jacob I understand the same sacred abode. Of the resting of this glory on the holy hills, we have a prophecy in Isaiah, iv. 5; and more expressly still in Ezekiel, xliii: "And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east"—"and the earth shined with his glory"—"and the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate, whose prospect is towards the east"—"and the glory of the Lord filled the house"—"and he said unto me, Son of Man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name shall the house of Israel no more defile."

If I understand the following verses in the Psalm before us, they imply that a time shall come, when the testimony respecting the bringing forth of the Messiah in Zion, must no longer be sought among the natural Israel; but at that period God would cause "the worst of the heathen" to record the prophecy, and its fulfilment. "He," the king Messiah, "hath been brought forth there," shall be the

general testimony, of nations now the most hostile to Israel. Men of every nation shall proclaim, "The Christ has been produced in Zion," and "Jesus of Nazareth is he." And it is he, that "is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour;" and he shall appear in his glory in the latter days, and make "Jerusalem the joy of the whole earth:" then shall they say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

I translate יָלַד in this passage "brought forth," rather than "born," for reasons assigned in the Notes on the second Psalm. It is not the birth of the Saviour which is immediately in view; that indeed did not take place in Zion; but his production, or introduction in the character of THE SON OF GOD, at his resurrection from the dead:

"Yet I have anointed my King,
On Zion, my holy hill.
I will proclaim the decree of Jehovah;
Elohim hath declared, "Thou art my Son,
This day I have brought thee forth," &c.

By this testimony of the nations here mentioned, we may understand the testimony of the Gentile Christians in general, though, perhaps, a special reference is had to that extraordinary scene which took place at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost: "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now, when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these that speak, Galileans? And how hear we every man in his own tongue wherein we were born?"

The reader will find that there is a remarkable agreement between the nations specified in the book of the Acts, and the nations pointed out in the Psalm before us.

Rahab, that is, Egypt, is first mentioned; and in the Acts we find enumerated, "Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene;" next Babylon is "to record," and the "Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Me-

sopotamia," were inhabitants of what once was the Babylonian empire : Philistia is also mentioned ; and " dwellers in Judea " are spoken of in the Acts—" dwellers in Judea," speaking a different language from what was common at Jerusalem. Who could these be, so probably, as the inhabitants of the ancient Philistia, which was in the precincts of the allotment of Judah ? Here, too, perhaps, on account of its port of Joppa, was a grand resort of " Cretes and Arabians," and " strangers of Rome."

The Grecian settlements of Asia Minor are the only ones specified in the Acts of the Apostles, which we have not noticed from the Psalm—" Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia : " and what could so probably indicate these countries, and all who spoke the dialects of the Grecian tongue, as the great mart of Tyre, in frequenting which, the Jews would have the most frequent opportunity of intercourse with these nations ?

To proceed with the prophecy : not only should there be this testimony, while the eyes of Israel should be blinded, but " the Highest, Jehovah "—" the Lord the Spirit," should cause it to be written in " the scriptures of the nations," in the books of the New Testament, that the Messiah had appeared, and had been secretly installed in Zion ; and that he would, in the latter days, appear again and establish her.

I am inclined to think, also, that the last verse refers to the particular testimony, that should be continually borne to these facts, by the adopting of these Psalms in the daily service of the Christian churches. For many ages has the chanting of the Psalter in the choirs of the Christian church, in every part of the world, been a striking fulfilment of this prophecy : " The singers, with the musicians " (or " like a choir or festive party among the ancients"), have celebrated Zion as the city of God in their *responsive song*.

PSALM LXXXVIII.^b

- 1 יהוה, Elohim of my salvation,
I have cried day and night before thee :^c
- 2 "Let my prayer come into thy presence,
Incline thine ear to my supplication."
- 3 For my soul is filled with affliction,
And my life cometh unto^d the abode of the dead.
- 4 I am counted with them that go down to the pit,
I am as a man past recovery^e from the dead :
- Dismissed like the slain, who lie in the sepulchre,
- 5 Whom thou regardest no more,
For they are cut off from thine hand :
- 6 Thou hast laid me in the pit beneath,
In darkness, in the abyss.
- 7 Thy rage hath pressed upon me,
And thou hast driven all thy waves against me.^f
- SELAH.
- 8 Thou hast removed far from me those whom I knew,
Thou hast made me their abhorrence :
I am confined alone,^g I cannot go out.

^b "A Song or Psalm for the Sons of Korah, to the chief Musician, or to the Giver of Victory, upon Mahalath Leannoth. Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite." Concerning this Heman, see 1 Chron. xxv. 1. &c. Whether he was the author, or whether the sons of Korah were the authors, or whether all this relates to their official duties in setting the Psalm to music, or of singing it in the congregations, cannot be ascertained.

^c The Syriac reads in the second line ימים ולילה ימים ולילה which Houbigant follows: and this, I think,

we must adopt for the sake of the metre, unless ישועתי in the first line be a mistake for ישועתי

^d Or, "hath arrived at."

^e A rad. אין אין *redit, vive reditus. Sicut vir, cui non est reditus : qui non redit.*" Vide SIM. Lex. Heb.

^f "Thou hast; tumbled thy waves over me." HORSLEY.

^g "I am shut up apart."—"This I take to be the proper sense of כלא When it denotes confinement, it always implies solitary confinement." Idem.

- 9 Mine eye is wasted with grief ;
I have called upon thee, Jehovah, all the day long ;
I have spread my hands unto thee.
- 10 " Wilt thou ' indeed ' perform a wonder among the dead ?^b
Are the deceased to rise up and praise thee ?
SELAH.
- 11 Is thy tender love to be proclaimed in the grave ?
Thy faithfulness in the seat of destruction ?^c
- 12 Are thy wonders to be made known in darkness ?
And thy righteousness in the land of oblivion ? "
- 13 As for me, I have cried unto thee, O Jehovah,
And in the morning my prayer cometh before thee.
- 14 Why, Jehovah, wilt thou reject my soul,
And hide thy face from me ?
- 15 I am afflicted, and gasping for breath ;
I suffer thy terrors with a distracted mind.^d
- 16 Thy burning anger is vented against me,^e
And thy terrors have undone me.^f
- 17 They have surrounded me as waters all the day long,
They are rolled upon me altogether.
- 18 Thou hast removed far from me him who loved me,
And every companion among them that know me is with-
drawn.^g

^b " They that lie in desolation."

^c אֲבִדוֹן "*locus mortuorum caliginosus* unde nequit quisquam redire." SIMON.—" The seats of destruction." HORSLEY.

^d Or, " When I bear thy terrors I am distracted." פֶּן *consilii inopem esse, animi pendere.*

^e " Thy burning anger vents its

fury upon me." HORSLEY.

^f " Forma plane singulari, צִמְרֹנִי, צִמְרֹנִי צִמְרֹנִי exconflatum ex צִמְרֹנִי exsciderunt me, i. e. penitus exsciderunt me."

^g " Keeping away from me mine acquaintance."—" And to this effect the Syriac." HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

Many commentators, ancient and modern, have conceived the writer of this Psalm a type of the Messiah ; but, rejecting the notion of a type, I would entitle this Psalm, with Bishop Horsley, "The Lamentations of the Messiah : " and, suffering myself to be led by the literal meaning of various expressions in the Psalm, I would further entitle it "The Lamentations of the Messiah, respecting the Abode of his Soul, as a separate Spirit, in the Regions of the Dead."

The doctrine of the descent of Christ into hell, is a doctrine almost denied among later reformers, from an abhorrence of any thing like the Romish doctrine of purgatory. This sort of "zealous affection," however, seldom leads to a discovery of the truth. If it did, there is another object of just abhorrence among Protestants, the doctrine of the sleep of the soul, little better than a branch of materialism.

The Church of England has with great propriety expressly asserted, as a distinct article of her faith, the descent of the soul of the Redeemer into the state of separate spirits, or hell. It has, however, generally been considered amongst us, that this descent into Hades formed no part of the passion of our blessed Saviour. But, perhaps, we have been too hasty in concluding from his declaration before he expired on the cross, "It is finished," that all was finished. His words may have reference to that stage of his sufferings only.

The expression, "Into thine hand I commend my spirit," is, I conceive, the language of one still destitute and in fear, of one who is about to tread a path, where he has nothing to rely upon, but the favour and help of God. And, if we recollect, it is to the epocha of the resurrection that the Scriptures refer the commencement of the Redeemer's triumph, and the termination of his humiliation : " Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain : whom God has raised up, having loosed the

pains of death : because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.”^o

The reader must not think it a vain repetition, if I again refer to Heb. iv. 7. It is truly a key to all these lamentations in the Psalms. These are the prayers and supplications of Him, who was made “perfect through sufferings,” offered “to Him that was able to save him from death”—“with strong crying and tears.” The prospect now in the immediate view of the Redeemer’s soul, is the awful period when his afflictions should be full—when his life, his vital part or soul, should arrive at Hades—when he should be “reckoned among them that go down to the pit.”

“His soul, indeed, was not to be left in hell,” neither was his “flesh to see corruption.” Our Lord, however, did really suffer death—death as the penalty of sin, both in respect of his body and in respect of his soul. In respect of his body, he was really dead:—“I am as a man past recovery from the dead—cast out as the slain, who lie in the grave.” It was no longer animated by the breath of the Almighty, or supported by his providence to be the residence of the immaterial spirit, but was suffered “to go from his hand,” in whom it lived and moved, as though, like other dead bodies, it was to return to corruption and dust. With respect to his soul, he was conveyed a prisoner to “the lowest pit.” The almighty Captive is “laid in darkness,” in the deep and “raging abyss” of the divine wrath: “Thy rage presseth upon me, and thou drivest all thy waves against me.” What is this, but, in the awful language of our blessed Lord, “to be cast into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth?”

And however abhorrent it may seem to our feelings, this was the death the sinner had to die; this, then, was the death which the DIVINE SURETY had “to taste, for every” one “whom he should bring to glory.” Of this death he speaks when he assureth his redeemed followers, that they “should never taste of death.”

The 8th verse, I think, refers to the same awful period

^o Acts ii. 23, 24.

of the abode of the soul of Jesus in the bottomless pit, while he lay a prisoner under the curse of God, separated from all his beloved companions; or, we may apply it to the whole time of his passion. He was alone in all his sufferings; but in this critical hour especially.

The 9th verse portrays the solicitude of the Redeemer's soul, anticipating in the days of his flesh, that awful hour of "the bitterness of eternal death."

In the 10th, 11th, and 12th verses his soul is caused to foresee what God would do by him in the regions of the dead: and it appears, from the obscure intimations, which it has pleased God to give us of the purposes of Christ's descent into hell as a separate spirit, that he not only went to suffer, but also to preach to departed souls, that is, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit;" perhaps quick or alive in spirit. "By which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison," &c.: "For, for this cause also was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."^p

I presume not to explain all the particulars of this "wonder among the dead," or to attempt to answer every difficulty. But, here is a fact recorded of the history of the unseen world, which I receive on the credit of God's word. And surely something like this is intimated in the narrative of our Lord's death, by St. Matthew: "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."^q

There is no necessity, we should remark, to suppose that these destined heralds of the Saviour's triumph and resurrection had been hitherto in a state of torment. Hell was a term including, in the ancient languages, perhaps of all nations, the twofold state of the dead, both of those who

^p 1 Peter iii. 18; iv. 6.

^q Matthew xxvii. 52.

"lift up their eyes in torment," and of those "who sleep in Jesus, the prisoners of hope"—who abide in 'the paradise of bliss—in "Abraham's bosom."

That the devoted soul of Jesus first sunk into the hell of torment, I understand the Scriptures to assert. How long he lay there, I presume not to say. We have but one datum, the speech which our blessed Master addressed, on his cross, to the penitent thief: "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Perhaps, therefore, the dreadful hour was not very long protracted, though the bands of death were not properly loosed till the third morning dawned upon earth. And then the Almighty Saviour "ascended from the lower parts of the earth," "leading his captivity captive."

With these preliminary observations let the reader again peruse these three verses: their meaning will, perhaps, now appear to him plain and important.

The 13th and five last verses are the resumed prayer and distressing supplication of our blessed Lord, while he awaited the stroke, and shrunk with horror at its nearer prospect. "The joy set before him," did indeed a little mitigate his despair. It was enough to compose his mind to resignation under the dreadful affliction; but it did not blunt the edge of the sword of divine justice. We shall recollect, that after there had been seen an angel from heaven, comforting the distracted mind of the devoted Victim, he had still to pass that dreadful conflict, when his agonizing soul should exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This will serve as a key to the conclusion of the Psalm.

PSALM LXXXIX.^r

- 1 THE loving-kindness of Jehovah will I ever sing,
I will make known with my mouth his faithfulness throughout
all ages.
- 2 For thou hast declared,^s that for ever is loving-kindness erected;
Thou hast established thy faithfulness as the heavens.
- 3 "I have made a covenant with my chosen,
I am sworn unto David my servant;
- 4 I will establish thy seed for ever,
And erect thy throne throughout all ages."

SELAH.

- 5 And let them in the heavens celebrate thy wonderful 'work,'
O Jehovah,
Even thy faithfulness in the assembly of the saints.^t
- 6 For who in the skies can be compared to Jehovah?
Who likened to Jehovah among the sons of the mighty?
- 7 El is greatly awful in the assembly of the saints,
And to be revered above all that are round about him.
- 8 Jehovah Elohim Sabaoth!
Who is like unto thee in power, O Jah?
When thy faithfulness doth encircle thee.^u
- 9 It is thou that rulest the swellings of the sea;
When it lifteth up its waves, thou wilt still them.

^r This Psalm is entitled, "Masehil of Ethan the Ezrahite." It appears that there was an *Ethan*, the brother of Heman, a grandson of Judah, 1 Chron. xi. 6. Dr. Lightfoot refers the Psalms which bore the names of these persons to those ancient times; but others dissent from the opinion. Horsley thinks it probable that the Psalm was occasioned by the death of Josiah: but observes, in a note, "many of the Jewish expositors, Rabba and Kenanna, Valle Jemoth

Rabba, Midrash Cantici Cantecorum, Solomon, and Aben Ezra, refer the Psalm to the Messiah."

^s The versions have אָמַרְתָּ. Bishop Horsley observes, "The heavens here must be understood of the inhabitants of the heavens—the sons of the mighty," mentioned in the next verse." The same, I conceive, may be observed of the קְדָשִׁים in the 5th verse.

^u Compare Isa. lxi. "Who is this that cometh from Edom," &c.

- 10 It is thou that crushed Rahab, so that she lay wounded to death;^{*}
With thy powerful arm thou hast dispersed thine enemies.
- 11 The heavens are thine, and the earth is thine;
Thou hast founded the productive soil with its fulness.
- 12 Thou hast created the north and the south,
Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name:
- 13 Thou hast a mighty arm,
Strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.
- 14 Righteousness and judgment are the basis of thy throne,
Loving-kindness and truth advance before thy presence.
- 15 Blessed are the people that know the royal shout;⁷
They shall walk, O Jehovah, in the light of thy countenance.
- 16 In thy name they shall rejoice all the day long,
And they shall exult in thy righteousness:
- 17 For thou art the glorious theme of their triumphal song,
And in thy good pleasure shall our horn be exalted.
- 18 For Jehovah is our shield,
And the HOLY ONE of Israel is our king.
- 19 Then THOU spakest in vision to thy WELL-BELOVED:
"I have appointed help in one that is mighty,"
I have exalted a chosen 'one' from among the people.
- 20 I have found David, my servant;
With my holy oil have I anointed him:
- 21 My hand shall be firm with him;
Yea, mine arm shall strengthen him:

^{*} Or, with Horsley, "She lies gasping with her wounds." Kennicott would render צלל a *soldier or warrior*. Geddes considers צלל as denoting a *reed*. "The haughty thou breakest like a hollow reed."

⁷ "He shall descend from heaven with a shout, &c." Horsley considers ירד as if in regimine with ירד

and renders, "Blessed is the people acquainted with the sound of the trumpet of Jehovah."

² "I have assigned due succours to a mighty one." Literally, "I have proportioned; i. e. I have appointed a mighty one to afford the succours to which his power is adequate."

- 22 The enemy shall gain no advantage over him,
And the son of wickedness shall not afflict him :
- 23 But I will rout his adversaries before him,
And I will smite those that hate him :
- 24 And my faithfulness and my tender love are with him,
And in my name shall his horn be exalted :
- 25 And I will place his hand on the sea,
And his right hand on the rivers ;
- 26 And he shall call unto me, 'Thou art my Father,
My Elohim, and the rock of my salvation.'
- 27 And I will appoint him the first-born,
Most High, above the kings of the earth.
- 28 My tender love I will keep for him for ever,
And my covenant shall stand firm with him ;
- 29 And I will establish his seed for ever,
And his throne like the days of heaven.
- 30 If his sons forsake my law,
And walk not in my judgments ;
- 31 If they violate my statutes,
And observe not my commandments ;
- 32 Then will I visit their rebellion with a rod,
And their iniquities with stripes.
- 33 But my tender love I will not withdraw from HIM,
Nor suffer my truth to fail.
- 34 I will not violate my covenant,
Nor will I alter that which hath passed my lips.
- 35 Once have I sworn in my holiness,
Truly I lie not unto David.
- 36 His seed shall endure for ever,
And his throne like the sun before me.

- 37 As the moon is he established for ever,
As the faithful witness in the sky."

SELAH.

- 38 But thou hast rejected and hast spurned,
Thou hast swollen with rage against thine anointed :
- 39 Thou hast dissolved the covenant with thy servant,
Thou hast cast his crown in dishonour upon the earth :
- 40 Thou hast broken down all his fences,
And hast laid his fortresses in ruins.
- 41 All that pass by the way have spoiled him,
He is become a reproach to his neighbours.
- 42 Thou hast exalted the right hand of his adversaries,
And hast made all his enemies to rejoice ;
- 43 Aye, thou hast turned the edge of his sword,
And hast not supported him in the battle.
- 44 Thou hast caused to cease his glory,^a
Thou hast cast his throne to the ground :
- 45 Thou hast cut short the days of his youth,^b
Hast overwhelmed him with disgrace.

SELAH.

- 46 How long, O Jehovah, wilt thou still hide thy face ?
'How long' shall thy wrath burn like fire ?
- 47 Remember, now, how frail I am :^c
Why hast thou created all the sons of Adam for nought ?
- 48 What mighty one shall live,^d and see not death,
Shall deliver himself from the hand of hell ?

SELAH.

^a "Hast taken away his unsullied glory." HORSLEY.—"Dignitatem ejus abstulisti;" or, according to Michaelis, "Cessare fecisti victorias ejus."

^b Perhaps we should take the other meaning of the root, and render, "The days of his eternal duration hast thou shortened;" i. e. the eternity promised

to him.

^c "How transient." Dr. LEE.

^d Or, "What man." "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. i. 18.

- 49 Where are thy former tender affections, O Lord?^a
 Thou hast sworn unto David in thy faithfulness.
- 50 Remember, O Lord, the reproach of thy servants :
 I bear in my bosom all ' from ' many nations :
- 51 The enemies of Jehovah who have reproached,
 They who have reproached the steps of thine anointed.
- 52 Blessed be Jehovah for ever,
 Amen and amen.

^a Or, with Horsley, "recompenses."

EXPOSITION.

The everlasting love of God is declared to be the subject of this Psalm—his faithfulness for ever to a covenant he hath made with one chosen out of mankind. This, of course, can relate to none besides the Redcemer of men. He is the David, or, as the name signifies, the Beloved of this divine poem. "His seed" are "the children which God has given him." "They are to be established for ever" as the children of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and an eternal throne is promised unto him, as the King of Saints.

From the 5th to the 19th the Psalm is addressed, I conceive, not to the everlasting FATHER, but to the SON—"the Holy One of Israel"—the predestined King—both "David's Son, and David's Lord"—"the Son" to whom it was said, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

The 5th and four following verses celebrate the anointed King, as the object of adoration, in the world of heavenly spirits above. "When he bringeth the first begotten into the world," the angels of God are commanded "to worship him:" "Angels and principalities and powers are made subject to him." The wonderful work of the redemption of lost man, in execution of the firm covenant that pledges the faithfulness of God to the mystic David

and his seed, is "the copious matter of the praises of heaven:" "which things angels desire to look into."^f St. Paul speaks of the developement of the plans of grace: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."^g

With these angelic beings, "inhabitants of heaven," "sons of the mighty,"—which in the Hebrew dialect means no more than "mighty ones," "angels that excel in strength," and with "saints," or "holy ones," the exalted Saviour is contrasted. Though chosen from among men, and raised to his celestial throne in the character of the SON OF MAN, yet he is admitted to have the pre-eminence; "being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."^h This comparison of the exalted Man to angelic beings is significant and important. But such a contrast between the absolute Deity and his creatures were futile and unnecessary.

In the 9th verse our Redeemer is celebrated as he whom "the winds and seas obey;" and, perhaps, under this metaphor, is intended the "madness of the people," the tumultuous uproar of those nations that in every age, but especially at the last grand contest, "imagine vain things against the Lord and against his Christ."

Rahab, in the 10th verse, doubtless means Egypt, not so much in allusion to what happened at the exodus; as to what is again to happen to a mightier adversary, who in the last days shall have identified himself with the sovereign of Egypt, and shall come up with "the Ethiopians at his steps," but whose destruction by HLM who leads the armies of heaven and claims the earth as his own, Tabor and Hermon shall witness with joy. In the extensive plains overlooked by these mountains, we know from other prophecies, Antichrist, in his last developement, is to meet his fate, "with the kings of the earth and of the whole world, in the great day of the battle of Almighty God."

^f 1 Peter, i. 12.

^g Ephes. iii. 10, 11.

^h Heb. i. 4.

It is on this destined spot, to an extent never felt before, by the enemies of God, the strength of the right hand of the divine Redeemer will be experienced. And after this, as is the universal declaration of the Scripture, the reign of the righteous King commences on earth.

And blessed and holy are the people that shall hear the joyful sound of that trumpet, which is then to sound, to gather the elect of God from the four winds of heaven: they have part in the first resurrection, and reign as kings and priests on the earth. Such I am persuaded is the subject of the 15th and three following verses. This is the last trumpet, because for the last time it calls together the congregation of the Lord.

In the 19th verse the theme is resumed from the beginning. The prophetic vision concerning the Beloved is recorded; how in the character of David, the anointed of the Lord, an everlasting covenant was made with him, to make him perpetually victorious over his enemies (ver. 22d, 23d)—to grant him a universal dominion upon earth (ver. 25th), in the character of the first-born of Jehovah, “the King of kings and Lord of lords.”

To Christ and to his seed the pledge of the divine favour was eternal: and this favour is celebrated in Scripture as “the sure mercies of David.” If his children, indeed, transgressed the laws of God, they were to expect the chastisements of their offended Father; but the everlasting covenant was to remain unaltered. That covenant had been made with their Head and Surety; and therefore, after all the chastisement of their sins, they must “reign in life” for ever, “by Jesus Christ,” and possess with him a kingdom over the earth as long as the sun and moon endure, or the bow appear in the cloud in the day of rain.

Such is the everlasting purpose of God, which must stand irreversible for ever.

But, notwithstanding this covenant and promise, so great may be the adversity of the church upon earth, so great her affliction on account of the chastisement of her sins, and the apparent prostration of the interest of Christ in the world, that the language of the remainder of the Psalm may often

express the feelings and fearful expectations of the people of God. And we may imagine such to be the pleadings of their great Advocate “touched with the feelings of the infirmities” of the poor members of his mystical body upon earth, as well as of Israel after the flesh, when they shall turn unto the Lord. Thus would he plead before the Holy Oracle above, till at length his prayer should be heard, and the final victory, so long promised, should be vouchsafed.

And touching, as we are, upon those times which immediately precede the great day of victory, how important is the Psalm before us, as used in our public assemblies of worship at this present day!

The 48th verse may be considered as the taunting reproach of the adversary—the scoffers of these last days; “saying, Where is the promise of his coming?”

THE FOURTH BOOK OF PSALMS,

ACCORDING TO THE HEBREW DIVISION.

ספר רביעי

PREFACE.

THE subject of the first psalm of this series is the frailty of man, with the sure and certain hope of a resurrection. Of the next the special providence that shall guard the human person of the Messiah.

Of the XCII. Ps. A thanksgiving for deliverance.

Of the XCIII. Ps. The establishment of Christ's kingdom.

Of the XCIV. Ps. His triumph in the last conflict.

Of the XCV. Ps. and five following taken together, the introduction of the First-begotten into the world.

In Ps. CI. He presides over his house.

CII. Ps. In connection with his rejection and passion, and future restoration of Jerusalem, his everlasting reign.

CIII. Ps. A Psalm of thanksgiving.

CIV. Ps. On creation and providence.

CV. and CVI. Ps. are historical.

PSALM XC.¹

1 O LORD, thou wast a habitation for us from age to age.^k

2 Before the mountains were brought forth,

Before the earth and the productive soil were formed,^l

Even from everlasting to everlasting thou art, O El.

3 Thou turnest man to dust,

And thou sayest, "Return, ye sons of Adam."

4 Truly a thousand years in thine eyes are as a day,

'As' yesterday when it has passed away.

5 And their course is a watch in the night,

They are as a dream in the morning.^m

Heⁿ is renewed like grass.

6 In the morning it puts forth and is renewed,

At even it is burnt up and withered.^o

7 Moreover we are consumed in thine anger,

And are hastened away in thy hot displeasure :

8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee,

Our secret in the light of thy countenance,

¹ Kennicott has argued, from the age assigned in this Psalm to the human race, that Moses, to whom the Hebrew title attributes it, could not be the author of it: but Horsley would invalidate this argument by a reference to Numb. xiv. 27, &c.

^k "O Lord thou art a place of refuge, thou hast been ours in every period."

^l "Before the birth of the universal frame." HORSLEY.

^m The interpretations of this part of the Psalm are exceedingly various: I have selected what, on the whole, I conceive to be the most probable, though I had once translated it very differently:

For a thousand years in thy sight are as yesterday;
They pass, and are as a watch in the night.
Their annual showers shall return;
They shall be in the morning like grass springing afresh:

In the morning shall put forth and spring afresh,
What at even is burnt up and withered.

Horsley translates the 15th verse,

Thou sheddest over them the dew of sleep:
In the morning they shall be like the springing grass.

Or we might render,

Thou wilt water them in their sleep;
They shall be in the morning like grass springing afresh.

In the morning shall put forth and spring afresh,
Whatⁿ at even is burnt up and withered.

ⁿ Dying man in his generations is changed and altered like the herbage.

^o Or, "cut off and dried up."

- 9 Then truly the whole of our days vanisheth in thy wrath,^p
We have finished our years like a vapour.^q
- 10 As for the days of our years, in them may be three score and ten,
Or, if 'there be' great strength, fourscore years.
- And toil and sorrow urge them on;^r
For the cutting off^s is speedy,^s and we have flown away.^t
- 11 Who regardeth the power of thy wrath
And thine anger, dreadful as thou art?
- 12 So teach us to number our days,
That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.^u
- 13 Jehovah, when shall the returning^x be,
And the consolation^y of thy servants?
- 14 Satisfy us early with thy tender love,^z
And we will sing and rejoice all our days.
- 15 O gladden us during the days that thou afflictest us,
The years we see of evil.
- 16 Let thy work be displayed to thy servants,
And thy glory upon their children.
- 17 And let the delight of Jehovah our Elohim be in us,
And direct for us the work of our hands;
Ay, the work of our hands, do thou direct it.

^p "Have been cleared off, or swept away in thine unrestrained wrath."

^q "Breath or thought." **הנף** *eloquium. sermo, cogitatio*: sed vaporem æstuantem intelligit Schultens; et Michaelis, *phantasma*. Or,

For when thou art angry, all our days are gone, We bring our years to an end like a tale that is told.^q

^r "רָחַם terror eorum (dierum) est ærumna, h. e. ærumna eos terret." I prefer, however, the other meaning of רָחַם a trepidando *fugit, celeravit*. Horsley translates, "The greater part of them is vexation and sorrow:" reading **רָחַם**

^s "חַיָּשׁ adverbialiter sumitur pro festinanter cito." SIMON. "In haste is he removed" or "hurrying away."

^t From Numbers xi, verse 31, we discover the meaning of this line, "the cutting off or cropping" is the separating of birds from their usual haunt, and making them take flight.

^u Or, "acquire a heart of wisdom."

^x "In the interpretation of this verse I follow Dr. Durell: the returning is the returning mentioned in the third verse, namely, the resurrection." HORSLEY.

^y Or, "thy relenting respecting."

^z "Sweet savour." Idem.

⁺ "Told," or rather, "is interrupted," i. e. brought to an abrupt termination.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm is addressed to the Creator, that is, as we learn from a comparison of other Scriptures, to the **ETERNAL SON OF GOD**, the Redeemer of men. The meaning of the first verse, "Thou wast a habitation" or a home "for us, &c.," I understand to refer to that mysterious union between Christ and his people, which was constituted in the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, before all time began. For all the blessings which a Christian enjoys, in this world or in the world to come, are said to be given him "*in Christ*" "before the foundations of the world were laid:" and our Lord represents himself, in the parable, as saying to the righteous at the day of his appearing, "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world."

The 3d verse rehearses the sentence passed upon man, "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return;" but glances at the same time at a restoration promised. In the fulfilment of this promise, however, God would appear "slack, as some men count slackness:" — measuring the works of the Almighty by their own short career, they would begin to stagger at a promise so long delayed. But we are bidden to remember, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." The course of a thousand years, when like the current of a stream it has flowed past, is but as a watch in the night to God; and all the triumphing of his enemies, which, drawn out from age to age, seems to poor short-sighted man to question the promise of his coming: "all their rage and all their machinations, are to the coming Saviour, like the vision of a night, as recollected by the waking man."

With this eternity of God is contrasted the frailty of men. Their generations succeed each other and pass away, like the quick vegetation of a southern climate, "like the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the fire."

The cause of this is stated: sin, which has brought

upon man the curse of his Maker, and which, in the Psalmist's age, had induced him to curtail the years of man, from a longer period permitted in the earlier ages of the world. Threescore years and ten, or fourscore years, were then, generally speaking, as now, the utmost length of the life of man, and toil and trouble would cut the lives of most shorter still, even where, as is intimated in the 7th and two following verses, there is no cutting short of the sinner's career by the visitation of some awful providence.

Yet, as is stated in the 11th verse, how little influence would these awful circumstances of human nature have upon man, to bring him back to a just sense of the power and anger of God! The Spirit, therefore, guides us to pray for divine teaching, that we may be led, by these moral reflections on the shortness of time, to cultivate true wisdom.

In verse 13 an animating inquiry is suggested, as to the period of the promised restoration, and the consolation of the servants of the Lord, after all their toils and griefs are over. And this is to be their comfort in the days of their pilgrimage, the expectation of the coming of the day of the Lord. Especially, are we led to pray, that we may be satisfied early in the morning of our days, with a manifestation of the tender love of God to our souls. This will gladden the hearts of the children of God in all afflictions. This part of the Psalm is therefore parallel to that prayer of the Apostle, "May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Jesus Christ!"

The Psalm concludes with a prayer for the church's prosperity, and for the influence of that Spirit of grace that works in the people of God to will and to do according to his good pleasure, while they are working out their salvation here below—"kept by the power of God, through faith, unto the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

PSALM XCI.

- 1 HE will dwell^a in the shelter of the Most High,
He will make his abode under the protection of Shaddai.
- 2 Saying to Jehovah, thou art my refuge and stronghold,
My Elohim, thou art He in whom I will put my trust.
- 3 Surely he will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler,
He will cover thee with his pinions from the evil design,^b
- 4 And thou shalt find shelter beneath his wings ;
His truth 'is' a shield and buckler.
- 5 Thou shalt not be afraid of alarm at night,
Nor of the arrow that flieth by day,
- 6 Of the ill^c that approacheth in darkness,
Of the blast^d that destroyeth at noon.
- 7 Though a thousand fall at thy side,
And ten thousand at thy right hand,
It shall not touch thee.
- 8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou look on,
And see the recompense of the wicked.
- 9 Since thou 'hast said,' Jehovah is my shelter,^e
Hast made the Most High thy house of defence.
- 10 No evil shall befall thee,
And no calamity shall approach thy tent ;

^a That is, "I who dwell"—a usual idiom of the language.

^b "Mischievous design." GEDDES. Or we should, perhaps, render, From the occurrence of accident.

^c Or, "the death;" i. e. the advance of the midnight murderer. Or, "the pestilence"—in Hindostan the cholera is called "the Death."

^d The *simoom*, or hot wind of the desert—a phenomenon in those re-

gions, too remarkable to have escaped the divine poet, in enumerating the sources of danger to human life.

^e Bishop Horsley supposes Messiah to speak in this line, "Truly thou, Jehovah, art my place of shelter;" and to be answered, "Thou hast made the Highest thy hope." Lowth approves the conjectural emendation of Merrick מוֹחֶסֶד I would rather understand אַחֲרָה after אֶתָּה

- 11 For he will give thee in charge to his angels,
To keep thee in all thy ways :
- 12 They shall bear thee up with their hands,
Lest thou shouldest dash thy foot against a stone :
- 13 Thou shalt walk over the asp and the basilisk,^f
And shalt tread under foot the lion and the dragon.
- 14 Because he hath cleaved unto me, therefore will I deliver him ;
I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.
- 15 He shall call, and I will answer, I am with him ;
In trouble I will rescue him and will glorify him.
- I will satisfy him with length of days,
And will show him my salvation.

^f So Horsley : who observes, " In the names of animals I think it safest to follow the ancient interpreters."

EXPOSITION.

The subject of this Psalm is the particular providence that should watch over the human nature of the Messiah, and should defend it from all those accidents to which mankind are exposed, and from the mischievous designs which evil spirits would not fail to entertain against the person of the destined destroyer of their dominion. According to the divine plan of redemption, the eternal Son, the divine Word, was to take upon him human nature, and "be made like unto his brethren in all things, sin only excepted." His body, therefore, in itself, was frail, and liable to injury, to disease, and sudden dissolution, from any of those causes which cut short the life of the children of men.

Had it been possible for those "who sought the young child's life" to accomplish their design, had there not been a particular restraint upon the powers of darkness during all the temporal life of Jesus of Nazareth, until his hour was come, the redemption of man had been crushed in the bud: but a particular providence was promised, and this became

the object of the trust and confidence of the man Christ Jesus.

No doubt there is a providence, and a particular providence too, over all the children of God ; and this is to be the object of their trust and confidence, in imitation of their Lord. The providence, however, pledged to the people of God, though "the hairs of their head are all numbered," and therefore "they may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, I will not care what man can do unto me," is not a providential care of the sort here described—affording a warrant of security from accident and pestilence, from private assassination or public calamity ; for, by many of these inflictions it is the pleasure of God to chasten and to remove his children. "None can understand love or hatred by all that is before him."—By attending to the outward and visible dispensations of providence, you cannot discover the objects of the loving kindness of the Almighty ; and fixing our eyes on eternal things we may say in faith, it matters little what becomes of the frail body of the individual saint, since the body of the Redeemer is secure, for in the mighty working of his divine power, the humanity of the blessed Jesus is that corn of wheat that abideth not alone, but falleth into the ground and bringeth forth much fruit. In being made in a heavenly sense partakers of the spiritual and glorified body of our risen Lord, we are conformed to the image of the First Born. He will change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.

But the promise in the Psalm before us is absolute security from all the calamities to which mankind, from the circumstances of their situation in this world, are exposed. The angels had a charge to secure the person of the Saviour from all these sources of harm, in order that the destined Victim of our peace might be brought at the appointed time, and might be offered a lamb without blemish for us. Over the person of our Lord, therefore, was exercised that kind of protection which Job's friends argued would superintend a good man : and perhaps we may say, that if in the children of God there were no sin to chastise or prevent, they would not be exposed to natural evils.

The reader will recollect that the 9th and 10th verses are quoted by the great adversary in the temptation of our blessed Lord. Satan, it appears, understood that this Psalm treated of the providential care to be exercised over the person of the Messiah: "If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down," &c. The aim of this evil spirit was to induce our Lord to abuse the promises of God by foolish presumption—a snare, it may be, in which he often catches the weaker saints in respect of the promises made to them.

But the prince of this world could find nothing in our HOLY SURETY, and, as the conclusion of the Psalm predicts, after being preserved by the special providence of God from every calamity, he was, as a most dutiful and obedient son, to be rewarded with exaltation and glory, and to procure immortality and endless salvation for all his redeemed people.

PSALM XCII.*

- 1 DELIGHTFUL is it to celebrate Jehovah,
And to chant thy name, O Most High ;
- 2 To tell of thy tender love in the morning,
Of thy faithfulness at night ;
- 3 Upon the ten-stringed lute, and on the psaltery,
With a thoughtful song upon the harp.^b
- 4 For thou hast made me glad through thy work,
I sing aloud because of the deeds of thy hand.
- 5 How great are thy works, O Jehovah !
Thy designs are very deep.
- 6 Stupid man perceiveth not,
And the foolish understandeth not this :

* The Hebrew title is, "A Psalm for the Sabbath day."

^b Kennicott reads as the LXX. seem to have read כנור עלי בהגיון

"In a soft strain upon the harp."

הגיון is rendered by some, "a triumphal song;" by others, "a premeditated song."

- 7 When the wicked spring as the grass,
And all the workers of vanity flourish,
- 8 Then are they to be destroyed for ever ;
But thou, O Jehovah, art eternally exalted.
- 9 For, lo, thine enemies, O Jehovah,
For, lo, thine enemies shall perish !
And all the workers of vanity be scattered.
- 10 And thou wilt exalt my horn like the Reem's ;
I have been anointed¹ with an invigorating^k oil.
- 11 'In triumph' shall mine eye look upon my adversaries,
And my ear hear of the wicked that arose against me.
- 12 The Just One shall flourish as a palm-tree,
He shall grow like a cedar on Lebanon.
- 13 Those that are planted in the house of Jehovah,
Shall flourish in the courts of our Elohim ;
- 14 They shall still shoot forth in old age,
They shall be full of sap and green :
- 15 To declare that Jehovah is righteous,
He is my rock, there is no unfaithfulness in him.

¹ See Horsley's note, and Parkhurst on בָּרַךְ ^k Or, "a fresh oil."

EXPOSITION.

Some of the Jewish writers, we are told, referred this Psalm to "the world to come;" that is, to the days of the Messiah:¹ and Bishop Horsley entitles it, "A Thanksgiving of the Church, or perhaps of Messiah himself in his own Person, for the final Extirpation of Iniquity and Idolatry." In these views of the sacred song before us, I readily acquiesce; and we are to offer up the same sacrifice of praise in anticipation of that long-expected event. We now contemplate the work of God far advanced, and have a

¹ See Gill.

theme for sacred music most glorious, the day is almost seen to dawn when all the mysteries of God shall be finished.

A period, indeed (ver. 6, &c.), is foreboded, of the extraordinary prosperity of wickedness and vanity, that will try severely the faith of men: this, no doubt, is that so often predicted age of imposture, infidelity and irreligion, which precedes the coming of the Son of Man—a day when “iniquity shall abound, and the love of many wax cold.”

But there is this consolation for the faithful few; this prosperity of the last enemy is short, and at the very height of its triumph, comes the epocha of the final extirpation of the enemies of the cross of Jesus: and then the anointed of the God of Jacob is exalted, and assumes the sceptre of his everlasting kingdom.

“In his days the righteous flourish.” And in the close of the Psalm we have a remarkable picture of the church’s prosperity, under the metaphor of a tree planted in the house of God, of a tree that in extreme old age is restored to its vigour, blossoms, and becomes fruitful: this, I conceive, is especially the gentile church, distinguished, as usual, by her sacred song and psaltery, *her* daily sacrifice. As appears from Psalm LXXI. she would experience an old age and sad decay in all her divine institutions, a deadness and a coldness in genuine piety, for want of that vital warmth which had animated her youth: but in the last days an invigorating spirit shall be poured out upon her; and “they that endure to the end shall be saved” with a glorious salvation. There is an epocha, also, in the future history of the Israelitish church, when it is said of her, “And she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.”^m

^m Hosea ii. 15.

PSALM XCIII.

- 1 JEHOVAH 'is' king, he hath robed himself with majesty ;
 Jehovah hath robed himself, he hath girt himself with strength.

Aye, when thou didst establish the productive soil, that it should
 not move ;ⁿ

- 2 Then was thy throne prepared, thou art from everlasting.

- 3 The floods have lifted up, O Jehovah,
 The floods have lifted up their voices ;

The floods lift up their waves

- 4 With the voices of many waters.

Mighty are the waves of the sea ;
 Jehovah is still more mighty !

- 5 Thy testimonies are most true,^o
 Thy house holiness doth beautify,
 O Jehovah, for prolonged days.^p

ⁿ Perhaps, "the habitable land shall be re-established," "fixed fast in its place"—and so to be referred to the restitution of all things.

^o "Most true to the utmost."

^p Bishop Horsley thus: "Thy oracles are very certain; holiness is the beauty of thine house for length of days," or days prolonged and lengthened out to eternity.

EXPOSITION.

There can be no doubt that this Psalm ^q relates to the establishment of the kingdom of Messiah. The Prophet sees him assuming the ensigns of his regal majesty; he salutes him as the eternal King, the Creator of heaven and earth, whose destined kingdom was preordained before the foundation of the world. Strange opposition, however, is foreseen to the establishment of Christ's kingdom. This especially refers to the nations engaged in the final conflict:

^q "Kimchi says that all these Psalms, this and the following to the 101st, are concerning the Messiah; and so say Kabvenaki and Ben Melch." Dr. GILL.

they are compared to the tumultuous rising of the waves of the sea, with incessant noise and roaring, as in XXV. Psalm. Compare Isaiah, xvii. 12, &c.

“ Ah ! this tumultuous noise of numerous nations !

They sound like the tumultuous noise of the sea.

And this roaring of the nations !

As the roaring of the mighty waters do they roar.

The nations roar like the roaring of many waters ;

But he rebuketh them, and they flee far away :

And he driveth them as the chaff on the mountains before the wind,

And as the thistle-down before the storm.

It is the time of evening, and behold alarm !

Before the morning they are no more.

This is the portion of them that spoil us,

The lot of them that plunder us.”

Terrible and mighty is the foe, and so probably will the trembling believer think in that day : but we are reminded, again, that Jehovah is far more mighty than they : this the issue of the great contest will show, and then will appear the truth of the Divine Oracles—then will commence the everlasting reign of Jehovah, and “ his tabernacle,” filled with his glory, “ will be with men :”—“ and he showed me ” “ the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God : and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”^r

^r Rev. xxi. 10, &c.

PSALM XCIV.

- 1 O EL of vengeance, Jehovah,
El of vengeance, shine forth.
- 2 Arise, thou judge of the earth,
Render a recompense to the proud.
- 3 How long shall the wicked, Jehovah,
How long shall the wicked triumph?
- 4 Shall they swell and talk^{*} so boldly;
—All the workers of vanity boast themselves?
- 5 They crush thy people, O Jehovah,
And they afflict thine heritage :
- 6 They kill the widow and the stranger,
And murder the fatherless :
- 7 And they have said, Jah seeth not,[†]
And the Elohim of Jacob regardeth not.
- 8 Understand, ye brutish among the people;
And ye fools, when will ye be wise?
- 9 He that planted the ear, shall not he hear?
Or he that made the eye, shall not he see?
- 10 He that instructeth the nations, shall not he correct
—He that teacheth man knowledge,[‡] shall he not know?
- 11 Jehovah knoweth the reasonings[§] of man;
That they are foolishness.
- 12 Blessed is the man whom thou instructest,
‘Whom’ thou teachest, O Jah, out of thy law :

^{*} “ ‘They talk;’ as the familiar phrase expresses it, ‘*they talk away*.’ the literal idea is ‘*the bubbling of a fountain*.’ ” HORSLEY.

[†] Or, “will not observe.”

[‡] Or, “perception.”

[§] Or, “machinations—reflections.”

- 13 That he may have peace in the days of evil,
While the pit is being dug for the wicked one ;
- 14 For Jehovah will not leave his people,
And will not abandon his heritage,
- 15 Until the Just ' One ' shall restore judgment,
And the upright in heart shall follow him.⁷
- 16 Who riseth up for me against the wicked ?
Who maketh a stand for me against the workers of vanity ?
- 17 Unless Jehovah had been my help,
My soul had soon dwelt in silence.⁸
- 18 When I said, My foot slippeth !
Thy tender love, O Jehovah, supported me.
- 19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me,
Thy consolations gladden my soul.
- 20 " Is the tribunal of iniquity in accord with thee ?
Decreeing wrong against me by law ? " ^a
- 21 They assemble in crowds against the person of the Just One,
And condemn the blood of the innocent.
- 22 But Jehovah is my high place,
And my Elohim, the rock of my shelter :
- 23 And he will requite unto them their iniquity, ^b
And cut them off in the midst of their crimes ;
Jehovah, our Elohim, will cut them off.

⁷ " Follow in his train." French and Skinner.

⁸ " The regions of inaction." Horsley.

^a So Kennicott and Horsley. " Decree or statute."

^b " Bring back upon them this their iniquity."

EXPOSITION.

The application of this Psalm to the grand subject that runs throughout these sacred songs, has been acknowledged by commentators in general.

The God of vengeance, who is to arise and judge the earth, to whom, in a certain sense, his "elect cry day and night" for vengeance, cannot be mistaken: since all judgment is committed to THE SON, "who is to judge the quick and dead at his appearing."

In the 3d and following verses, the proud oppressors of the people of God are described, and the victims of their tyranny are metaphorically called "the widow," "the stranger," and "the fatherless." No doubt this description may apply to all the long "hostility" between "the seed of the serpent," and "the seed of the woman;" but a particular trait in the character here drawn, seems to identify these adversaries, particularly with the atheistical enemies of the last days.

—The Psalm seems to suppose that they need instruction in the first principles of natural religion. For such is plainly the import of the 8th and three following verses. And how nearly, in effect, have modern philosophy and political economy established principles of action, that with all the parade of science have almost entirely excluded the Deity from the government of the world, and have gone very far to destroy the expectation, that "he is coming to judge the earth!" The boasted age of reason, however, will be found a vanity. But blessed is he who is the subject of the divine teaching, and whose understanding is chastened to submit to the instructions of revelation. Blessed is he at all times, but especially in these times of reproof and blasphemy; waxing worse and worse, as the end approaches, —while the pit is actually being prepared into which Antichrist must fall. It will be a time of trouble indeed; but the Lord will not forsake his people, until, at length, the JUST ONE arises, and the day of vengeance arrives.

The 16th and 17th verses seem to describe the destitute state of the church: she has no helper; she, or rather her great Advocate pleading her cause, represents his hope as reduced entirely to the expectation of divine interposition.

The 18th verse exhibits a crisis indeed. In language that expresses the views and alarms of his people, the Saviour mystically speaks of his feet as just ready to slip from

under him. But this is the moment of deliverance. The day-star of heavenly consolation arises on his people, in the midst of their anxious alarms, and displays to them the earnest of their final success.

Legal forms have often been given to the proceedings of the persecutors of God's people; and the sacred institutions both of the civil and religious authorities, have been perverted to be the tools of oppression. And such, it should seem, will be the character of the last attack upon Christ and his church, "decreeing wrong against me by law." This is symbolized in the vision of the Revelation, by "three unclean spirits like frogs, coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet"—"which go forth unto the kings [of the earth and] of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of Almighty God." What expressly the Spirit means we know not as yet; but, perhaps, the time is near at hand that will disclose all: and, agreeably with the end of the Psalm before us, it is the universal language of Scripture, that in this last conflict the destruction of the enemy is sudden, and overtakes him unexpectedly in the midst of his triumphant wickedness, or ambition. See we not already from the mouth of the old serpent, the deniers of the Son of God, the blaspheming infidel, the Socialist, &c. Mark the prevailing features of the rulers of Apostate Christendom, to discard all profession of religion; and mark the present movement of that false prophet, who by his lying wonders led them of old into this apostacy.

PSALM XCV.

- 1 O COME let us sing unto Jehovah,
Let us raise the loud peal to the Rock of our salvation ;^c
- 2 Let us come before his presence with a song of praise,
Let us chant aloud to him with psalms.
- 3 Surely Jehovah is a great El ;
Ay, a great king over all Elohim.
- 4 In whose hands are the depths of the earth,^d
Also the summits of the mountains are his.^e
- 5 Whose is the sea, and it was He that made it,
And his hands that formed the dry land.
- 6 O come let us worship, let us bow down,^f
Let us kneel before Jehovah, our Maker :
- 7 Surely this is our Elohim, and we are his people,
His pasture, even the flock of his hand.^g
- To-day, will ye hear his voice ?
- 8 "O harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
As in the day when ye were at Massa in the desert ;^h
- 9 When your fathers tempted me ;
Proved me, althoughⁱ they had seen my works.

^c "The verb קריע signifies to make a loud sound of any sort, either with the voice or with instruments. In the Psalms it generally refers to the mingled din of voice and instruments of music in the public service of the tabernacle."—"זמירות I take to be songs in measured verse, adjusted to the bars of a *chant*." HORSLEY.

^d Or, "The impenetrable deeps."

^e "The inaccessible heights."

^f That is, so as to touch the floor with the forehead, while the worshipper is prostrate on his hands and knees. See 2 Chron. vii. 3.

^g That is, the flock which he feeds, and the flock which he guides.

^h I think, with Rosenmuller, that these are proper names.

ⁱ Kennicott renders גם by "quavis."

10 For forty years dealt I angrily^j with that race,
 And I said, These are a people erring in heart,
 And they have not known my ways;^k

11 Accordingly I swore in my wrath,
 That they should not enter into my rest."

^j "Bore as a grievance, with weariness and indignation."

^k Or, "And these shall not know my ways."

EPXOSITION.

Bishop Horsley considers the XCVth, XCVIth, XCVIIth, XCVIIIth, XCIXth, and Cth, as one: he entitles it: "The introduction of the First-begotten into the World, a prophetic Song, consisting of six Parts." "These Psalms," he observes, "if I mistake not, form one entire prophetic poem, cited by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews, under the title of 'The Introduction of the First-born into the World.' Each Psalm has its proper subject, which is some particular branch of the general argument, the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom."

Whether we take the six Psalms, with this learned Prelate, as one, or consider them as distinct, is immaterial; certainly, the subject is the Messiah's exaltation and kingdom.

The Psalm before us is well made, in the service of the Church of England, an introduction to the daily Psalmody. It commences with a general exhortation to this delightful employment, and invokes all the powers of music to celebrate the praises of Jehovah. And I conceive it is Jehovah, as manifested in the person of the Son, that is particularly meant. He is the great God, and will be manifested as the great King over all that have been the objects of the idolatrous veneration of mankind. He is acknowledged as the Lord and Possessor of the whole earth, of that terraqueous globe which his hands had made.

In the character of Creator, he is to be acknowledged and worshipped; but to his church he is known in a more near and endearing relation. He is their covenanted God, and they

are his peculiar people. Over them he exercises the office of a shepherd, pasturing and leading his flock; nor can we here again mistake what Person of the undivided Godhead is particularly meant, for Jesus is "the good shepherd"—the shepherd of the flock, whom the Father in his divine justice strikes;—"that Paraclete," of whom the other Paraclete, who now is with the church on earth, beareth witness.

St. Paul has commented on the remainder of the Psalm: I need but copy his exposition, premising only, that he makes all the transactions recorded of the history of the Israelites in the desert, to be a typical representation of what befalls the church of God under the Gospel dispensation. Israel after the flesh, typifies the professing world and their fall through unbelief; their failure of entering into Canaan represents how the many called Christians, come short of the rest of faith through the same evil heart of unbelief. "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, *To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works, &c.*" "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin: for we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end: while it is said, *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.* For some, when they heard, did provoke; howbeit, not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the Gospel," or have the glad tidings been "preached, as well as unto them: but the word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it: for we which believe

do enter into rest, as he said, *As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest*: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake, in a certain place, of the seventh day on this wise: *And God did rest the seventh day from all his work*. And in this place again, *If they shall enter into my rest*. Seeing, therefore, that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: again, he limited a certain day, saying in David, *To-day*, after so long a time; as it is said, *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*: for, if Jesus," or Joshua, "had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day. There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God: for He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us therefore labour to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

PSALM XCVI.

- 1 SING ye to Jehovah a new song ;
Sing to Jehovah, all the earth ;
- 2 Sing unto Jehovah, bless his name,
Spread the tidings of his salvation from day to day ;
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations,
His wonderful works among all the peoples.
- 4 For Jehovah is great, and highly to be praised,
He is to be feared above all Elohim ;
- 5 For all the Elohim of the nations are idols,¹
But it was Jehovah who made the heavens.

¹ " Mere nothings"—" are contemptible." HORSLEY.

- 6 Glory and majesty are in his presence,
Power and splendour in his sanctuary.
- 7 Ascribe unto Jehovah, ye families of the nations,
Ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength ;
- 8 Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory of his name ;
Bring an oblation, and come into his courts.
- 9 Prostrate yourselves before Jehovah in his holy majesty ;
Tremble ye at his presence, all the earth.
- 10 Say ye among the nations, Jehovah is king,
Aye, the habitable land is established^m that it cannot be moved ;ⁿ
He will rule the nations with equity.
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth exult ;
Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof ;
- 12 Let the field be glad, and all that is therein ;
And let all the trees of the forest rejoice—
- 13 Before Jehovah ; for he cometh,
For he cometh to govern the earth.
- He will govern the world in righteousness,
And the nations according to his truth.

^m Re-established, restored, fixed
firm in its place.

ⁿ The versions read יָבִין

EXPOSITION.

A new song, as a Jewish writer^o remarks, is ever to be understood of the times of the Messiah ; and as we were instructed by St. Paul to apply the last Psalm to the Gospel call and exhortations, so this Psalm evidently invites the people among the nations who obey the Gospel, to join in this new theme of redemption about to be fully accomplished by the second coming of Christ—how he has appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and to them that wait for him, will appear a second time without sin unto

^o Jarchi.

salvation. For this God the nations are exhorted to exchange their idol gods: and no doubt the objects of worship of the papal, as well as of the pagan world, are in the view of the prophetic Spirit.

The anticipated subject, as usual, is the appearing of the Great God our Saviour Jesus Christ, in his glorious majesty in the later days, "when the kingdom of our God shall fully come." All created nature is called upon to hail the appearance of that great day, agreeably with the language of St. Paul: "for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God;"—"because the creature," or the creation, "itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The good creatures of God now suffer a cruel slavery to the vain and wicked dominion of sinful man; but a glorious liberty awaits these abused slaves in that better world, wherein dwelleth righteousness. This is the promised restitution of all things.

PSALM XCVII.

- 1 JEHOVAH reigneth, let the earth be glad,
Let the extended shores rejoice.^p
- 2 Clouds and darkness were round about him,
Justice and judgment the fixing of his throne: ^q
- 3 A fire went before him,
And consumed his enemies on every side.

^p "Many isles." "'Let all the various settlements of men rejoice.' I cannot more exactly render the force of the Hebrew עַיִן than by this periphrasis. The English language has no single word to convey the same idea; and the word isle or islands has hardly any relation to it."

HORSLEY.—"עַיִן *regio, terra habitata*, in specie *regio maritima*, tractus maritimus in primis *maris mediterranei*." SIM. Lex.

^q Prepared the way for the establishing or restitution of this throne—the throne of the Messiah.

- 4 His lightnings illuminated the habitable land,
The earth saw and was shaken with pangs :
- 5 The mountains melted like wax at the presence of Jehovah,
At the presence of the Lord^r of the whole earth :
- 6 The heavens manifested his righteousness,
And all the nations saw his glory.
- 7 All they were ashamed that worshipped an image,
That made their boast in vain idols.
Prostrate yourselves before him, all ye Elohim.^s
- 8 Zion heard and rejoiced,
And the daughters of Judah were glad,
Because of thy judgments, O Jehovah :
- 9 For thou, Jehovah, art most high,
Exceedingly great over all the earth,
Thou art exalted above all Elohim.^t
- 10 Ye that love Jehovah, abhor evil ;
He keepeth the souls of his beloved,^u
He will deliver them from the hand of the wicked.
- 11 Light is scattered^v on the JUST ONE,
And joy on the upright of heart.
- 12 Rejoice, ye righteous, in Jehovah,
And thankfully commemorate his holiness.

^r Sovereign, Heir or Possessor.^s The Chaldee reads here כָּל מַלְאֲכֵי עֲמִים ; the other versions^t All, whatever had been the ob-

ject of idolatrous worship.

^u Objects of His loving-kindness.^v Or, "is sown for," according to another reading, "Has risen upon."

EXPOSITION.

The Psalm clearly relates to the coming of Christ, and has been very generally so understood. In the longing expectation of that event, we ought to offer up this song of praise in the Christian church : and, perhaps, the time is already arrived, when the choirs above have begun to anticipate the very near approach of this glorious scene :

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in the heavens, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever, &c.”^y

The Hebrew terms rendered, “the multitude of the isles,” the “various settlements of men,” “the extended shores,” seem in a special manner to designate these western parts of the world, which were known as distant coasts visited by the ships of Tyre. All Europe might originally fall under this denomination, with some parts of the sea-coasts of Africa and even of Asia: nor can there be any doubt, that all subsequent discoveries by sea, once uninhabited, but now colonized and settled from the old countries, would be designated by this term. Some nations of this description are called upon, in particular, to rejoice in the Saviour’s appearing.

Clouds and darkness are round about him—the dispensation that ushers in his kingdom is awful and perplexing. But all is right: the work of judgment must precede the work of mercy. “And the temple was filled with the smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.”^z

The 3d, 4th, and 5th verses, are a plain description of the second advent, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe,” “in that day.”^a

The worshippers of the beast and his image, and all the nations relapsed into idolatry, are the object of this awful visitation: but the true believers, in the isles afar off, or wherever they are found, will lift up their heads with joy when these things begin to come to pass.

^y Rev. xi. 15.^z Rev. xv. 8.^a 2 Thess. i. 7, &c.

The gods are called upon to worship their king. And the Apostle, in the first of Hebrews, teaches us to understand this of angels: meaning by angels, as is plain from the following verse (7th), all the messengers of God's will and providence, angelic or human, intelligent or material. Now, in fact, either angels (properly so called) and departed saints, or the benefactors of mankind, or secondary causes and agents of God, have been, both to the Pagans and to corrupted Christians, those "that are called God and are worshipped:" but the highest of them fall prostrate before the **FIRST-BORN**, "when he is brought into the world;" and in the last day will the mightiest angels be seen ascending and descending upon the **SON OF MAN**.

Zion—the restored Israel, and not that nation alone, but all the remnants of mankind whom the Lord will spare in the great tribulation, and now to be gathered into "one fold, under one shepherd"—are to rejoice at the approach of this long-expected day; which, as we are again careful to point out, answers the often repeated petition of the church, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

The close of the Psalm seems to be an exhortation particularly addressed to those, who on the near approach of the great day, shall be found waiting for the consolation of Israel. These times are spoken of as trying times: "Iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold." The secret thought of some in high trust and office in the visible church, is, "My Lord delayeth his coming;" and they abuse their authority to purposes of oppression and sensual indulgence. At such a time, the cry is emphatic, "Ye that love Jehovah, abhor evil;" and the promise most seasonable of divine keeping and deliverance, till the light sown shall spring, or till the light of prosperity shall be shed upon Christ and his afflicted people. Let this, then, be their "song in the house of their pilgrimage."

PSALM XCVIII.

- 1 SING unto Jehovah a new song,
For he hath done wonders ;
He hath wrought salvation ^b with his right hand,
And with his holy arm.
- 2 Jehovah hath showed his salvation ^c in the sight of the nations,
He hath revealed his righteousness ; ^d
He hath remembered his tenderness and truth
Unto the house of Israel ;
- 3 And all the ends of the earth have seen
The salvation ^e of our Elohim.
- 4 Raise the loud peal to Jehovah, all the earth ;
Burst forth and sing aloud and chant. ^f
- 5 Chant unto Jehovah to the harp,
To the harp and to the sound of the psaltery ;
- 6 With cornets and the sound of the trumpet, ^g
Raise the loud peal before Jehovah the king.
- 7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof, ^h
The productive soil, and they that inhabit it.
- 8 Let the rivers clap the hand,
Let the hills shout together for joy,
- 9 Before Jehovah ;
For he cometh to rule the earth,

^b Or, "obtained the victory."^c "Made known his victory."^d "Vindictive justice."^e Or, "victory."^f Horsley translates this line —
"Strike up and sing and chant the
measured lay." He considered these
two lines as "the full chorus." Thefour next lines he marks as a first
semi-chorus: the four following as a
second; the remainder a full chorus.^g Or, "with trumpets and the sound
of the horn."^h "All its contents." All its com-
plement of creatures.

He will rule the world with righteousness,
And the nations with equity.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm is very clear in its application to the general subject of the Redeemer's second coming. It seems to contemplate the event, as nearer, than the last sacred song. Or rather it anticipates the further progress of the wonderful scenes to be unfolded at that era. The clouds and darkness which were about the throne are past, the judgments of the last plagues are finished, the marriage supper of the Lamb is come, the nations of them that are saved walk in the light of the New Jerusalem—and all the creation, now liberated from the bondage of corruption, congratulate the establishment of the universal kingdom of Messiah, whose righteous reign commences over all the earth.

PSALM XCIX.

- 1 JEHOVAH is king, let the nations tremble,
ⁱ He sitteth between the cherubim, let the earth be moved;^k
- 2 Jehovah is great in Zion,
And he is exalted over all the nations.
- 3 Let them celebrate thy name: Great and terrible!
Holy 'is' it and mighty!
- 4 Thou art a king that loveth judgment,
Thou hast rightly restored judgment,
Thou hast executed justice in Jacob.

ⁱ Or, "He inhabiteth, &c."

^k The proper meaning of נָחַל appears to be, *to wave to and fro*, like

something suspended in a string.

Compare נָחַל נָחַל "Bow down."
HORSLEY.

- 5 Exalt ye, O ye nations, Jehovah our Elohim,
And fall ye prostrate before the stool of his feet;
It is holy :
- 6 Moses and Aaron 'are' amongst his attendants,
And Samuel among those who invoke his name.¹
- 7 'The nations' are calling unto Jehovah, and he himself doth
answer them ;
From the pillar of cloud doth he speak unto them ;
They have kept his testimony and the decree that he gave them.
- 8 O Jehovah, our Elohim, thou hast humbled them ;
Thou hast been a pardoning El to them,
But thou hast taken vengeance for their evil actions.^m
- 9 Exalt ye Jehovah our Elohim,
And fall prostrate before his holy hill ;
For Jehovah our Elohim is holy.

¹ Perhaps,
Moses, and Aaron with his priests,
And Samuel with those that call on his name.

^m See Horsley.

EXPOSITION.

“ ‘Jehovah, seated between the cherubim in Zion’—
‘reigns over all the earth, and is to be praised for the justice
of his government.’ This Psalm alludes, I think, to a reign
of Jehovah in Zion, subsequent to the restoration of the
Jewish nation, when Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, are to bear
a part in the general worship.” Such is the view, which
Bishop Horsley has taken of this Psalm; and it certainly
best accords with the connexion and literal meaning of the
mystical song. For though God’s speaking from the cloudy
pillar might seem at first sight to refer to the history of the
past; yet the circumstance of Samuel’s presence cannot
be explained on that supposition. But if we apply the
Psalm to scenes posterior to the restoration, when the Re-
deemer shall come and all his saints with him, who are to be
made kings and priests, and reign over a kingdom upon
earth, nothing forbids that Moses, and Aaron, and Samuel,

may all three be employed together, on some high behests of the Almighty Saviour, towards the settlement of the Jewish nation: as the Psalm seems to specify, "executing judgment in Jacob." The cherubim I have long thought to typify some highly exalted ministers of Jehovah, in the church triumphant now in heaven, but one day to come down upon earth; or rather they are emblematical of the universal body of the children of the resurrection, who appear in the glory of the only-begotten Son of God, and are seated with him upon his throne, before which the spared remnants of mankind who have come out of the great tribulation receive their final orders and destiny.

PSALM C.

- 1 RAISE the loud peal to Jehovah, all the earth,
Worship Jehovah with gladness,
- 2 Come into his presence with the sound of joy.
- 3 Know that Jehovah is Elohim,
He made us, and we are his;ⁿ
His people and the flock of his pasture:°
- 4 O, enter his gates with psalmody,^p
His courts with praise;
Celebrate him, bless his name!
- 5 For Jehovah is good,
His tender love is everlasting,
And his truth^q from age to age.

ⁿ Reading according to the Masoretical correction, which is followed by Jerome, Lowth, Horsley, &c.

^o Or,
It is he that hath caused us, and not we ourselves,
To be his people and the sheep, &c.

^p "Or, 'confession.' The original word רִיידָה is very ill rendered here and in other places of the public translation, *thanksgiving*. It denotes,

generally, those public acts of homage and devotion, whether of prayer, praise, or thanksgiving, by which God is acknowledged or confessed." HORSLEY.

^q Horsley renders, "his steadfast love."—"Literally, *truth*; but I think the thing particularly intended is, the constancy and steadfastness of God's attachment to his free love." Perhaps, "pledged troth."

EXPOSITION.

As the former Psalm more particularly celebrated the accession of Israel after the flesh, into the glorious kingdom of Christ ; so the Psalm before us anticipates the coming of all the gentile nations, to pledge their allegiance to the Lord of the whole earth, and to share in his holy worship. As we read of "the holy city," "the New Jerusalem," almost at the end of the divine oracles : "And the nations of them that are saved, shall walk in the light of it : and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it ; and the gates of it shall not be shut by day : for there shall be no night there, and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."

These nations of the redeemed, even all the earth, are represented as claiming a share in the kingdom of the God of Israel : "He made us, and we are his—his people and the flock of his pasture." Nor is their claim rejected : they are invited to enter with songs of praise into the presence of their SAVIOUR GOD ; and to celebrate for ever and ever that tender love, and unrepented promise of God, to which they owe their salvation. In happy anticipation of this event, the redeemed of the Lord from among the nations may sing this song in the house of their pilgrimage, while they wait the coming of the Saviour. Our church has selected it to express the grateful feelings of the faithful, when the mercies of redemption are brought to their recollection, by the reading of the second lesson in the morning service. In spirit, and in blessed earnest of better things to come, they possess already all the privileges of the flock of Christ : led by the Holy Ghost the Comforter—and when the day foretold shall come, they have the promise that they shall sit with the Redeemer on his throne ! Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

PSALM CI.

1 I WILL sing of loving-kindness and judgment;
To thee, O Jehovah, will I chant :

2 I will teach the way of perfection.^r
When wilt thou come to me?^a

I will walk before^t thee in the perfection of my heart,
In the midst of my house ;

3 I will not set before my eyes
A work of wickedness.^u

I have hated the deed of them that turn aside,^z
It shall not cleave to me.

4 A perverse heart shall depart from me,
I will not know a wicked person.^v

5 Him that slandereth his neighbour in secret,
I will cut off :

Him that hath a high look and a proud heart,
I will not endure ;

6 Mine eyes are upon the faithful of the land,
That they may dwell with me.

He that walketh in the way of perfection
Shall minister to me ;

7 He shall not dwell within my house,
Who hath acted deceitfully ;

He that telleth lies shall not be established
In my presence.

8 From morning to morning will I destroy
All the wicked of the land,^z

^r Or, "carefully will I regard."

^a Or, "When shall it arrive to me?"

^t Or, "proceed—conduct myself in."

^u Or, "affair of Belial."

^v עֲשָׂה סֵי' some render, "he that committeth sin."

^y Or, "a wicked evil heart."

^z Or, "that soon I may destroy all the wicked of the earth."

Till I have cut off, from the city of Jehovah,
All the workers of iniquity.

EXPOSITION.

It is very clear from the close of this Psalm, to what subject it must be applied. We have a representation of "the righteous King," "sitting upon the throne of his kingdom," "ordering it and establishing it with judgment and with justice for ever."

The Messiah, in the character of a worshipper of the Father, anticipating the period of his destined kingdom, is celebrating that tender love of the Father, on which all his prospects rest. He interweaves with this subject the judgment he is to execute for him, when he shall sit upon the throne of his kingdom; "The Lord will judge his people;" nay, Peter tells us, that "judgment will begin with us."

But when righteous judgment is the subject of the great Advocate's song, we must be careful to distinguish. It means not, that God will enter into judgment with his redeemed people, to punish them for their sins and failings, by exclusion from the city of God. This is contrary to "the sure mercies of David." "He will visit their offences with a rod; but his loving-kindness—his tender love, will he not utterly take from him." "Who is he that layeth any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Judgment, as it regards the church and house of God, has ever a reference to that separation which will take place in the visible church, between the real children of the heavenly Father, and those that are called such, but feignedly, and not in reality. These are "the tares," which "the angels are to gather into heaps to burn,"—"the bad fish" in the Gospel drag, that are to be cast away—"the goats" to be placed on the left hand, when "the Son of Man sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom"—"the dishonourable vessels of wood and stone" "in the great house," not meet for the Master's use.

To individuals, indeed, death is bringing home this

distinction every hour. He that "falleth asleep in Jesus," "is present with the Lord." But "whither he is gone, they who are of this world," "who are from beneath," "cannot come:" they "go to their own place." With respect to the church militant here on earth, as a body, the discriminating judgment cannot of course take place till the coming of Christ at the last day. And as many a hypocrite is deceived to the day of his death, so will many be astonished at that day to be disowned of Christ: "Depart from me," "I never knew ye," "ye that work iniquity." As the Prophet Malachi is inspired to say to the people that profess to delight in the expectation of Christ's coming: "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," &c.

We are to notice, too, that moral character is the mark by which the children of God are now and ever externally to be distinguished from the children of the devil. As the wheat proceeds to maturity, the tare appears also; and by their fruits ye shall know them.

"Christ, as the son over his own house," is speaking in the Psalm. His pure eyes cannot endure an evil work, or, as the original is, "an affair of Belial." As he told the Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil, for his works ye do." "The deed of them that turn aside," is somewhat obscure; but I think designates the revolters to vain worship and idolatry; though it may imply the wavering attachment of the double-minded professor.

"A perverse heart shall depart from me." The term signifies crooked, distorted, torqueous, and every departure from perfection may be so denominated;^a but this cannot be the designation of character here intended, for who then could stand? We find the word twice used in relation to apostates from God: the passages where this occurs will best supply the idea we are to attach to the term in this place. Moses, speaking of the rebellious Israelites, says,

^a Job ix. 20.

"They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children, they are a *perverse* and crooked generation."^b Isaiah, speaking of the same persons who reject the word of revelation, says, "They have made them *crooked* paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace." What is meant by a perverse heart in this place, is, therefore, the vicious perverting of the religious principle, and not that perverseness over which an offending child may be mourning.

"I will not know an evil or wicked one." An evil or malicious heart or person is also denounced; and perhaps the most natural construction leads us to understand heart rather than person, as the subject of the Hebrew word we render evil or wicked. And here, again, the heart of the righteous will be made sad, if we understand, by evil heart, that corruption of nature, "which doth remain; yea, even in the regenerate;" "my flesh," as Paul speaks, "in which dwelleth no good thing." But an evil, malicious, or malignant heart, is what the New Testament would term a mind that loveth not—a mind destitute of pity and charity, unmerciful, unforgiving, envious—a disposition that cannot prevail in a real child of God, but which too often discovers the unsound professor, condemned by his own prayer.

The secret slanderer of his neighbour is next denounced; and St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, has strongly marked, from quotations taken from the Psalms, the condemnation of many professors of religion, for sins of the tongue. And many who have reformed their outward conduct, are certainly betrayed here; "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."^c

"The high look;" that is, pride and haughtiness—the proud or ambitious heart, cannot be tolerated in that righteous kingdom: and all his disciples are humbled and become as little children before they can enter into the kingdom of God, as its gates are entered here on earth under the gospel dispensation.

The deceiver and liar is lastly specified as bearing "a

^b Deut. xxxii. 5.

^c See Romans, iii. 13, 14; and James, i.

spot that is not the spot of his children:" but they are described as "the faithful in the land," as those "that walk in the way of perfections:"—faithful in their allegiance to their King, they acknowledge no other law or method of salvation but the law of God and Gospel of Jesus Christ. It cannot of course be understood that they are perfect in the way, for that can apply only to their righteous Advocate; but they walk in the same way, following the footsteps of Him they love.

When Christ comes, all the proud and wicked are to be destroyed from off the earth, and in his professed church this work of judgment begins.

"Blessed are they that do his commandments; that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without, are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie;" and of Zion it is said, "and all thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

PSALM CII.^d

- 1 O JEHOVAH! hear my prayer,
And let my cry come before thee :
- 2 Hide not thy face from me ;
In the day of my distress bend thine ear unto me ;
In the day of my calling, O haste to answer me.
- 3 For my days have been consumed^e like smoke,
And my substance is burnt out like a firebrand.

^d The Hebrew title is, "The Prayer of the Afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his Complaint

before Jehovah."

^e Or, "have vanished."

- 4 My heart is blighted like grass, and withered,
For I have forgotten to eat my bread.
- 5 From the voice of my sighing, my bones cleaved to my skin.^f
- 6 I became like the pelican of the wilderness,
I was like the night owl in desolate places.
- 7 I watched and was as the zephur,^g
Sitting solitary on the house-top.
- 8 All the day long my enemies reproached me ;
I was an execration^h to them that scorn me.
- 9 Aye, I have eaten ashes like bread,
And mingled my drink with tears,
- 10 Because of thy wrath and indignation ;
For thou hast lifted me up, and cast me away.
- 11 My days are like the lengthened shadow,
And as for me I am withered like grass.
- 12 "NAY ; thou art Jehovah ! thou abidest for ever,
And thy name from generation to generation :
- 13 It is thou that arisest, and hast compassion on Zion.
When it is the time to favour her, when the appointed time is
come,
- 14 When thy servants take pleasure in her stones,
And regard her dust with favour.
- 15 And the nations shall fear the name of Jehovah,
And all the kings of the earth thy glory,

^f "Flesh" more literally ; but see Ps. cxix. 120, and Job, xix. 20.

^g גֶּזֶר it will readily occur to the reader, means the flat roof of the eastern houses, a usual place of retirement to this day with the inhabitants of these countries. It is, I conceive, the complaining suppliant, that abideth like a zephur, solitary on the house-top, and not the zephur itself : whatever this animal may be, whether a bird, or the *wild goat* of the rock ; the same as צִפִּיר vide

F F

צִפִּיר. "The solitary sparrow." See PARKHURST.

^h נִשְׁבַּעַי "Per me jurant dicendo : accidat mihi quod Judeis, si fallo, sensus : a meis miseris argumenta et exempla sumunt, si quid mali imprecari volunt, si sibi, ut jurantes, vel alteri, ut maledicentes ; execrationum formula sum. Jes. lxxv. 15. Jerem. xxix. 22." ROSENMULLER. — "And the profligate make me the standard of execration." HORSLEY.

- 16 When Jehovah hath built Zion,
And his glory has been seen :
- 17 'When' he hath turned himself to the prayer of the destitute,ⁱ
And no 'longer' despiseth their prayer.
- 18 Let this be written for a future generation :
And let a people to be created sing praises unto Jehovah—
- 19 'That Jehovah hath looked from the high place of his sanctuary,
From the heavens hath he looked down upon the earth,
- 20 To hear the groaning of the prisoners,
To set at large the children of death,
- 21 To proclaim the name of Jehovah in Zion,
And his praise in Jerusalem ;
- 22 When the peoples are assembled together,
And the kingdoms to serve Jehovah.' "
- 23 HE hath depressed my strength in my journey,
He hath cut short my days.
- 24 I said, O my El, take me not off
In the midst of my days !

"THY years are for all generations !

- 25 Of old thou didst lay the foundations of the earth,
And the heavens were the work of thine hands :
- 26 They shall perish,^k but thou remainest ;
Aye, all these shall become old like a garment,
Thou shalt change them as a vesture :
- 27 They shall be changed, but thou art the same,
And thy years shall never end.
- 28 The children of thy servants shall remain,
And their seed shall be established in thy presence."

ⁱ "The people emptied and poured forth—made bare or stripped naked."

^k Or, "These may depart, disappear, or be taken away."

EXPOSITION.

The Apostle, in his Epistle to the Hebrews,¹ has afforded us a key to the exposition of this Psalm: he refers to the latter part of it, as addressed to Messiah, the Son of God. The whole Psalm, therefore, is to be interpreted of him, and he, as St. Augustin thought, is the poor afflicted, who, when he is overwhelmed, poureth out his complaint before the Lord.

The Psalm, thus interpreted, accords with many which we have considered before. The suppliant makes his earnest prayer to his heavenly Father in the day of his distress. The complaint represents one emaciated with grief and worn out with sorrow, a poor disconsolate and solitary being, that seeks in retirement to hide his feelings from the public view, or who, disliked, shunned, and avoided by all, is compelled to bear alone the burden of affliction with which his heart is oppressed. Surely this is none other than "the man of sorrows;" he who was, in an emphatic sense, "acquainted with grief," whom Isaiah saw in the prophetic vision; "his visage so marred, more than any man, and his form, more than the sons of men."

The language of the Prophet is very similar to that of the Psalmist: "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground," &c. &c. especially ver. 3, "He was acquainted with griefs, and was as one that turneth away his face from us; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." This agrees exactly with the comparison to the solitary animal in the Psalm.

Such, then, is the prophetic description of the private life of our divine Master, while he was growing up to man's estate, and was preparing for the sacrifice he was to offer at the appointed time. Throughout his life he bore for us the wrath and indignation of the Almighty; and under the fear of death he comes at last to cry out almost in despair: so I understand the 11th verse. But here he is comforted—"he is heard in that he feared."

¹ Chap. i. 10—12.

He is addressed, in the 12th verse, as the everlasting God that cannot die: the promise to him even in his human nature as the Son of Man is lengthening of days for ever and ever: he may sink into the bands of death and hell, but it is not possible that he should be holden of them: he is that same victorious Redeemer, though addressed as a dying man, that is to stand up at the destined period, and execute all the predicted deliverance for Jerusalem; for that Jerusalem where he is now to suffer as a vile criminal, and to whom he says, in the midst of his sufferings, as though the prospect even then was cheering his desponding heart: "Verily, I say to you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in THE NAME OF THE LORD."

This deliverance of Jerusalem shall be, we are told, when "his servants delight in her ruins, and regard her dust with favour." Who are his servants, when Judah is an outcast, but his people among the Gentiles? O, may we not hope that the great interest which this glorious land is beginning to excite in the breast of Christians, forebodes the season when the Redeemer shall come to Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob?

All believers are interested in the restoration of Zion; for, in connexion with the events of that restoration, as we have repeatedly gathered from the word of prophecy, is the coming of Jesus Christ in his glory, and the establishment of his promised kingdom. We should all, therefore, long and pray for the time of the Lord's acceptance of the prayer of the poor destitute—that is, of Israel, still a *ceaseless mourner*, made bare, despised, and rejected.

The 18th verse informs us, that this is written for a future generation, not for that generation who deny and crucify their King; but for one that shall arise from the stock of Israel in the latter days. And, in the mean time, during Israel's unbelief and their rejection as a people, there will still be found a created people, a new creation of Gentile believers, that will offer up the ordained sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to Jehovah.

The 19th and three following verses describe the hope

that shall animate this created people in waiting for the restoration of Israel. God has not cast off his people whom he foreknew: "Israel hath not stumbled, that it should fall for ever." They are now "the groaning prisoners," "the children of death," doomed "to pine away in their iniquities." But they are still, at some future period, to glorify God in their long-lost country, and Jerusalem is to become "the joy of the whole earth."

In the days of our Saviour's humiliation, though his soul was sometimes relieved a little by the prospect of the joy that was set before him, "the chastisement of our peace" required, that destitute of hope, except in the pity of his Judge, he should suffer all the agonies of despair under the fear of death. This is the meaning of the doleful cry in the 23d and 24th verses, compare Isaiah liii. 8. etc., to which the same answer is returned by the divine Oracle, as before in verse the 12th. The eternity of the Jehovah addressed, is stated in a language that cannot be mistaken, and illustrated in a manner that cannot be explained away. Who, but the great God, is addressed here—the Creator, the Disposer of all things? and this Jehovah, the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, tells us, is the Son of God, who was incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

We are again told in the last verse, that his servants shall live and reign for ever in the presence of their Redeemer; we may say then, with the Apostle before referred to, "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."^m However, the mention in this last verse of a "people" and their "seed" must have a special reference to the remnant of Israel in the flesh who are left on the renewed earth, all to be made righteous and inherit the land for ever.

^m Heb. xii. 28, 29.

PSALM CIII.

- 1 BLESS Jehovah, O my soul!
And all that is within me bless his holy name :
- 2 Bless Jehovah, O my soul !
And forget not all his bounties :
- 3 Who hath forgiven all thy sin,
And hath relieved all thine infirmities :
- 4 Who hath redeemed thy life from destruction,"
Who hath encircled thee with compassion and tenderness :
- 5 Who has so filled thy lot with prosperity,
That thou canst renew as an eagle thy shaken-out feathers.*
- 6 Jehovah hath executed righteousness
And judgment for all that were oppressed :
- 7 As he made known his ways unto Moses,
His works unto the children of Israel.
- 8 Jehovah is pitiful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and full of tenderness :
- 9 He will not always be chiding,
Neither retaineth he his anger for ever :
- 10 He hath not dealt with us according to our sins,
Neither hath he rewarded us after our iniquities :
- 11 Truly as the heaven is high above the earth,
So great is his kindness towards them that fear him :
- 12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath he removed our transgressions from us :
- 13 As a father pitieth his own children,
Jehovah pitieth them that fear him :

ⁿ Or, "from the pit."

^o See Lee's Lexicon. "Thy life." be rendered,

GESENIUS. Perhaps the line might

"Who hath replenished in prosperity thine ornaments."

- 14 For he knoweth our frame,
He remembereth that we are but dust.
- 15 The days of man are as grass,
He flourisheth as the flower of the field ;
- 16 For the wind passeth over it,
And it is not, and is known no more in its place :
- 17 But the tender love of Jehovah is from eternity,
And unto eternity, over them that fear him ;
- 18 And his righteousness is for children's children,
To them that keep his covenant, and regard his commands to
do them.
- 19 Jehovah hath established his throne in the heavens,
And his kingdom ruleth over all.
- 20 Bless Jehovah, ye his angels,
Mighty in strength, executing his word,
When ye hear the voice of his command :
- 21 Bless Jehovah, all ye his hosts,
Ye, his ministers, that do his pleasure :
- 22 Bless Jehovah, all ye his creatures,
In all places of his dominion :
Bless Jehovah, O my soul !

EXPOSITION.

This beautiful Psalm at first sight seems to have less of the prophetic character than any we have yet considered. It must at all times be suitable to express the gratitude of a soul that has received mercy. It is, however, remarkable that the *Targum* has particularly noted this Psalm as composed "in the spirit of prophecy," as though the compilers of that work were sensible that it described a state of prosperity, which, in respect of God's people at large, had not yet been enjoyed. And I think, on examination of the Psalm itself, we have some indication, that, like the rest, it

anticipates a future period in the history of the redemption of man. Particularly in the 5th verse, we find a thanksgiving for the renewal of youth, if our authorised version be maintained, and though the metaphor be altered the sense is the same. Now, from a comparison of Psalm LXXI. XCII. &c. it will be seen, that there was reason to conclude, that under the metaphor of extreme old age, was represented the state of the Gentile church towards the time of the second advent; and the mercies then to be vouchsafed were compared to the blooming and fructification of a tree in the season of old age. I take this as the key to the proper application of the Psalm. It is the Church, those whom he hath called, not the Jews only but also of the Gentiles, that now comfort themselves with the promises—but when it shall be taken up into glory then shall be the renewal under a better covenant of God's former mercies, to the posterity of Abraham and to his seed for ever. The 7th verse acknowledges that all her knowledge of God's will is through Moses and those that were born to Israel after the flesh.

The memorial of righteousness kept for children's children seems to apply to a people whose immediate ancestors were not, as a people, faithful to God's holy covenant. But the entail of everlasting love is not cut off, when a generation arises, that has respect unto his covenant, and observes the direction of his holy word. These are acknowledged as the children of the patriarchs, and as heirs according to the promise. Israel sanctified to keep the new covenant, then the once forsaken shall sing as in the days of her youth.

The 19th verse clearly predicts the coming of the kingdom of Christ in all his glory, with his holy angels, and "his ministers that are to do his pleasure," as I believe, the elect people of God, that shall "reign with Christ," and subsisting in their glorified bodies, "shall be priests of God and of Christ."^p The benefit of this dominion of Christ and his saints is universally felt. "Bless Jehovah, all ye his creatures, in all places of his dominion."

^p Rev. xx. 6.

PSALM CIV.^a

1 BLESS Jehovah, O my soul !

Jehovah, my Elohim, exceeding great wast thou,
Thou didst clothe thee with glory and majesty.^f

2 He wrapped himself in light as a mantle,^g
Spreading out the skies as a veil,
3 And framing his habitation with waters.^h

He made thick clouds his chariot,
Going upon the wings of the wind :

4 He made winds his messengers,
Flaming^u fire his minister :

5 He settled the earth on its foundations,
That it should never more be moved.

6 THOU coveredst it with the deep as with a garment,
The waters stood above the hills :

^a Bishop Horsley thinks, "as there is no allusion in this Psalm to the Mosaic ritual, nor any mention of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, it should seem that it was of an earlier date than the exodus: it consists of parts sung alternately by two companies: the parts are easily distinguished, inasmuch as one semi-chorus always speaks to God in the third person, the other addresses him in the second."

^f Or, "with splendid majesty."

^g *שֶׁלֶמָה* an outer garment covering the whole body; q. d. a complete covering. Perhaps,

He threw over the light as a mantle,
He spread out the skies as the canvas of a tent,
And formed from the waters his habitation.

^h "Flooring his chambers with waters." GEDDES. — "Laying the floors of his chambers upon the waters." HORSLEY. After referring, however, to the different places where the word occurs, and considering the

structure of ancient buildings, I conceive the allusion to be to the roof, or contignated frame of the house. Genesis xix. 8, seems decisive. *בַּעַל הָרֵרֶת* Contignating his lofts or chambers in the waters, or watery vapours (so Montanus); that is, making these waters for a time his residence." PARKHURST. We seem to lose somewhat of the beauty of the original, by translating *עַל־יָרֵךְ* too literally. It signifies, certainly, *upper rooms*, or *stories*: but the allusion is not to these on account of their situation, but as the part of the house principally inhabited by its owner, the lower parts of eastern houses being used for offices. See Parkhurst and authors there quoted: compare Ps. xviii. "He set darkness his veil around him, his canopy the waters and thick mists of the clouds."

^u Or, "blazing—flashing."

- 7 At thy rebuke they fled,
At the sound of thy thunder they hastened away :
- 8 The mountains rose, they ran down the cloven valleys,
Unto that place which thou hadst fixed for them.
- 9 Thou hast set a boundary they may not pass,
They may no more return to cover the earth.
- 10 HE sendeth forth the springs into the torrents,
That they may run between the hills.
- 11 That they may afford drink to all the beasts of the field,
That the wild asses may quench their thirst.
- 12 That beside them the birds of the air may have their dwelling,
May sing among the leafy branches.
- 13 He watereth the hills from his high chambers,
That the earth may be filled with the fruits of his doings.
- 14 He maketh the grass to grow for the cattle,^z
And herbage for the labour of mankind ;

That they may produce food from the earth,
Even food that supports the heart of feeble—man ;^y
- 15 That they may brighten their faces with oil,
And that wine may gladden the heart of feeble—man :
- 16 That the trees of Jehovah may be fully supplied,
The cedars of Lebanon that he hath planted :
- 17 That there the birds may make their nests,
The stork, her house on the fir-trees.
- 18 The lofty mountains are for the wild goats,
The rocks a shelter for the antelopes.
- 19 The moon performed the appointed times,
The sun knew^a his going down.^a

^z Or "cultivation." See 1 Chron. xxvii. 26.

^y I transpose with Bishop Horsley, but make the two last lines of verses

14 and 15, only to change places.

^a Learned, or understood.

^a The times of his entrance, as it were into the earth.

- 20 THOU appointest darkness, and it is night ;
Then all the beasts of the forest creep forth :^b
- 21 The lions roaring after their prey,
And seeking their food from El.
- 22 The sun riseth ; they withdraw,
And lie down in their dens.
- 23 Man goeth forth to his work,
And to his labours until evening.
- 24 How manifold^c are thy works, O Jehovah !
In wisdom hast thou made them all.
- The fulness of the earth is thy possession,^d
- 25 This sea, vast and wide on every side.^e
- There are moving creatures without number,
Animals both small and great :
- 26 There pass the ships,^f
This Leviathan thou created to take his pastime there.
- 27 All these wait upon thee
To give them their meat in its season.

^b "Move," or, "are in motion."

^c "Great and various." Idem.

^d "Thy possession or thy property:" but from the more frequent use of the term in ancient times, *possessions of cattle*; so that the line, in fact, sounds in the original, "All the creatures of the earth are thy flocks and herds." But perhaps,

"The earth is filled with thy creations,
The very sea itself, great, extending wide its arms."

^e "Extending hands."

^f Or, "There go the whales." I cannot but indulge a conjecture in this place, that either the word we translate *ships*, had anciently another meaning, and signified some aquatic animal; or that for תנינים we should read תנינים. Comp. Gen. i. 27. And God created great whales, תנינים הגדלים and every living creature that moveth, החיה

הרמשת, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind. It has, however, been thought by some, that not whales, but some large marine animals, known on the shores of the Mediterranean sea, are intended by the term. The leviathan, where it is described at large, Job, xl. is clearly the *crocodile*, by far the greatest and most terrific animal with which the inhabitants of these regions were acquainted. That it should here be numbered with the marine animals, need not surprise us, as the object of the divine poet is merely to display the kingdom of the *watery world*. Of these wide domains the *sea of the Nile* forms, in his view, a part. "ים transfertur ad omnia flumina majora. Est igitur in specie *Nilus*. Jes. xix. 5; Nah. iii. 8. Ut Arabes de eo dicunt

ג. Coran, xx. 39." SIM. LEX. Heb.

- 28 Thou givest food, they gather it :
 Thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good ;
- 29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled ;
 Thou recallest their breath, they expire,
 And return unto their dust ;
- 30 Thou sendest forth thy breath,^a they are created ;
 Thou renewest the surface of the earth.^b
- 31 THE glory of Jehovah shall be for ever,
 Jehovah shall rejoice in his works.
- 32 He looked on the earth and it trembled,
 He touched the mountains and they smoked.
- 33 I will sing unto Jehovah while I live ;
 So long as I have my being I will chant to Elohim,
- 34 Sweet shall be my musing of him,
 As for me I will rejoice in Jehovah.
- 35 Sinners shall be utterly destroyed from the earth,
 And the wicked, till there are no more.

Bless Jehovah, O my soul !

Praise ye Jehovah !

^a Or, " Spirit."

^b Ground or land.

EXPOSITION.

"This Hymn celebrates the power of Jehovah, displayed in the creation of the universe, and the formation of the dry land out of the midst of the waters. It next describes the dependence of all nature, animal and vegetable, upon the providence of the same almighty hand for sustenance and preservation."ⁱ This will sufficiently mark the subject and contents of this poem at large. It may be

ⁱ Horsley.

used in our devotions, public or private, as a song of praise for creation and providence.

But towards the end of the Psalm the subject is again touched, which runs throughout all these prophetic songs—the day when he that made the earth will regenerate it,^k and suffer the creation no longer to be subject to vanity, and to wicked men—when Jesus, the Son of the Most High, shall appear—when he “shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels,”—“when he shall be revealed in flaming fire”—“when the mountains shall flow down at his presence as the melting fire burneth, as the fire maketh the water to boil, to make known his name to his adversaries, that the nations may tremble at his presence.”¹ “For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”—“Ye shall tread down the wicked, they shall be as ashes under your feet.”^m

^k Some of the Jewish writers saw the description of a resurrection here, v. 30. See Poole.

¹ Isaiah, lxiv. 1, 2.

^m Mal. iv. 1—3.

PSALM CV.

- 1 WORSHIP Jehovah, call upon his name,
Make known his deeds among the nations.
- 2 Sing ye of him, chant of him,
Tell of all his wondrous works.
- 3 Glory ye in his holy name,
Let the heart of them rejoice that seek Jehovah.
- 4 Seek Jehovah and his strength,
Entreat his presence continually,

- 5 Record the wonders he hath done,
His miracles and the wonders he hath wrought.
- 6 Ye seed of Abraham his servant,
Ye children of Jacob his chosen.
- 7 He, Jehovah, is our Elohim,
His judgments are all in the earth.
- 8 Record his everlasting covenant,
The decree he ordained for a thousand generations ;
- 9 That which he covenanted with Abraham,
And his oath unto Isaac ;
- 10 Which he confirmed to Jacob for a statute,
To Israel for an everlasting covenant :
- 11 When he said, To thee will I give this land,
Canaan is the lot of your inheritance ;
- 12 When they were 'but' a few in number,
As a small body, and strangers therein.
- 13 And they journeyed from nation to nation,
From one kingdom to another people.
- 14 He suffered no man to do them wrong ;
Aye, he reproved kings for their sakes.
- 15 Touch not mine anointed,
And do my prophets no harm.
- 16 When he would call for a famine upon the land,
Breaking the whole staff of bread :
- 17 He sent a man before them ;
Joseph sold for a slave :
- 18 His feet are pressed with fetters,
His person was secured with iron,
- 19 Until the time that his word came to pass ;
Until the oracle of Jehovah had proved him.ⁿ

ⁿ "Until the time of his prediction had come to pass, and the word of Jehovah had cleared him." GREEN.

- 20 The king sent and released him,
The ruler of the people let him go free :
- 21 He made him lord of his house,
And ruler of all his substance ;
- 22 To correct his princes at his pleasure,
And to teach his sages wisdom.
- 23 Then Israel came into Egypt,
And Jacob was a sojourner in the land of Ham :
- 24 And he made his people increase greatly,
And rendered them more powerful than their enemies.
- 25 Their heart turned to hate his people,^o
And to deal fraudulently with his servants.
- 26 He sent Moses his servant,
Aaron whom he had chosen :
- 27 They showed his signs among them,
His miracles in the land of Ham :
- 28 He sent darkness, and it was dark,
And they went not about their affairs :^p
- 29 He turned their water into blood,
And slew their fish :
- 30 Their land swarmed with frogs,
In the retreats of their kings :
- 31 He spake, and there came the gnat,
Mosquitoes in all their borders :
- 32 He gave their showers to be hail,
The fire of lightnings in their land :
- 33 He smote their vines and their fig-trees,
And brake the trees of their borders :

^o Compare Judges, xx. 39, 40. Yet, perhaps, it should be, "he turned."

^p See under מָרַר "*originarie ultro citroque motus, et huc illuc agitatus*

est." SIMON. Geddes translates, "Yet they changed not their resolution." Horsley approves of the translation of Merriek, "And his words were not disobeyed."

- 34 He spake, and there came the locust,
And caterpillars without number ;
- 35 And they ate up all the grass of the earth,
And they devoured the fruit of their land.
- 36 And he smote all the first-born in the land,
The chief of all their strength.
- 37 And he brought them forth with silver and gold,
And there was not one that fainted among his tribes.
- 38 Egypt was glad at their departure,
For their fear had fallen upon them.
- 39 He spread a cloud for their covering,
And a fire to give light by night.
- 40 They asked, and he brought quails,
And filled them with the bread of heaven :
- 41 He opened the rock, and the waters flowed,
They ran in the dry desert like a river ;
- 42 For he remembered his holy word,
And Abraham his servant :
- 43 And he brought forth his people with rejoicing,
His chosen with a shout of joy :
- 44 And he hath given to them the lands of the heathen,
And they inherit the labours of the nations ;
- That they should observe his statutes
And keep his laws.

Praise ye Jehovah.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm needs no other comment than a comparison with the history of the exodus; only we should remark the record of the covenant respecting the everlasting possession of the land of Canaan, verse 8, &c.

PSALM CVI.¹

- 1 PRAISE ye Jehovah, worship ye Jehovah,
For he is good, for his tender love is for ever.
- 2 Who can tell the mighty acts of Jehovah ?
Can show forth all his praise ?
- 3 Blessed are they that keep judgment,
And they that do righteousness at all times.
- 4 Remember me, O Jehovah ; with thy favour towards thy
people,
Visit me with thy salvation,
- 5 That I may see the good of thy chosen,
That I may rejoice with the joy of thy nation,
And glory with thine inheritance.
- 6 We have sinned with our fathers,
We have been perverse and rebellious.
- 7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt,
But rebelled at the sea, at the Red Sea :
- 8 Yet he saved them for his name's sake,
That he might make known his power.
- 9 Then he rebuked the Red Sea, and it was dried up,
And they went through the deep as through a desert.
- 10 So he saved them from the hand of him that hated them,
And rescued them from the hand of the enemy :
- 11 But the waters overwhelmed their adversaries,
Not one of them was left.

¹ Bishop Horsley thinks that this Psalm was written after the captivity of the ten tribes : but I rather agree with those who, from a comparison of 1 Chron. xvi. 7, &c. think that David

was the instrument of the Spirit of prophecy in its composition, as in the composition of most, if not of all the Psalms.

- 12 Then they believed his words,
And they sang his praise.
- 13 Soon they forgot his works,
They waited not his decrees ;
- 14 And they lusted greatly in the desert,
And they tempted El in the wilderness ;
- 15 And he gave them their request,
And sent them food^r to their minds. ^a
- 16 And they provoked Moses in the camp,
And Aaron, the consecrated of Jehovah.
- 17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,
And covered the assembly of Abiram :
- 18 And a fire burned in their assembly,
And the flame blazed upon the contentious.
- 19 They made a calf in Horeb,
And worshipped a molten image :^t
- 20 Thus changed they their GLORY
Into the resemblance of an ox that eateth grass.
- 21 They forgot El, who had saved them,
Who had done great things in Egypt ;
- 22 Wonderful things in the land of Ham,
Fearful things by the Red Sea.
- 23 Then he said he would destroy them,
But for Moses his chosen :

He stood in the breach before him,
To turn back his wrath from destroying.
- 24 And they rejected the pleasant land,
And did not believe on his word :

^r "Legere mallem מִזֶּן *cibus*, rad.
זֶן" Sm. Lex.
^t "To their utmost appetite, even
to nausea."

^t "More properly, 'the over-laid
image;' or, more literally still, 'the
metalline shell.'" HORSEY.

- 25 And they murmured in their tents,
And hearkened not to the voice of Jehovah :
- 26 And he swore to them with uplifted hand,
That he would cause them to fall in the desert.
- 27 That he would cause their seed to fall amidst the nations,
And would disperse them amidst the countries.
- 28 Moreover they were joined to Baal-Peor,^u
And ate the sacrifices of the dead :
- 29 And they provoked HIM to anger with their doings,
And a plague broke in upon them.
- 30 Then stood up Phinehas and executed justice,
And the plague was stayed :
- 31 And this is counted to him for righteousness,
From age to age for ever.*
- 32 They provoked HIM also at the waters of Meribah,
And it went ill with Moses on their account.
- 33 For they angered his spirit,
So that he spake inconsiderately with his lips.
- 34 They destroyed not the nations
In the manner that Jehovah commanded them ;
- 35 But mixed themselves among the nations,
And learned their practices :
- 36 And they served their idols,
And they were a snare unto them.
- 37 And they sacrificed their sons
And their daughters unto demons :

^u "*Copulatus est,*" forte etiam in Baal Fegoris sacris sacras vittas sumsit, ab Arab. **ضِمَدٌ** vitta seu *tania religavit caput.*" MICHAELIS.

* Hence the everlasting priesthood

of Aaron confirmed to him and his seed, to walk before his anointed for ever, (see I Sam. ii. 35) which priesthood we learn from Ezekiel is in the persons of the sons of Zadoc, to extend into the world to come.

- 38 And they shed innocent blood,
The blood of their sons and of their daughters ;

These they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan,
So that the land was defiled with blood :
- 39 And they were polluted in their doings,
And were adulterous in their works :
- 40 Then the anger of Jehovah burned against his people,
And he abhorred his inheritance :
- 41 And he delivered them into the hands of the nations,
And they who hated them ruled over them :
- 42 And their enemies oppressed them,
And they were humbled beneath their hand.
- 43 Often did he deliver them,
But they were rebellious in their counsels,
And were brought low by their iniquities :
- 44 But he looked upon their distress
When he heard their cry :
- 45 And he remembered on their behalf his covenant,
And he was pitiful according to his great tenderness :
- 46 And he made them to be pitied
Of all that had led them captive.
- 47 Save us, O Jehovah, our Elohim,
And gather us from among the nations ;

That we may celebrate thy holy name :
That we may triumph in thy praise.
- 48 Blessed be Jehovah, Elohim of Israel,
' Who is ' from eternity and unto eternity.

And let all the people say, Amen.

Praise ye Jehovah.

EXPOSITION.

The first six verses of this Psalm may well be supposed to be put into the mouth of the Gentile church. The Psalmist is then taught to speak in the person of an Israelite in the latter days, acknowledging, like the prophet Daniel in Babylon, his sins and the sins of his people; and we may set before us the remnant of Israel, brought at length into those circumstances which Moses describes: "And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands: and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall ye pine away with them. If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with the trespass which they trespassed against me, and that they also have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept the punishment of their iniquity: then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Israel, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land."^y

The Psalm before us is a rehearsal of the chief circumstances of the Jewish history, for the purpose of confessing how great had been, in various instances, their national sins; but of recording at the same time, how often the Lord had thought upon his covenant and pitied them, and restored them from their captivity;—so shall he once more, and they are to have their country in everlasting possession.

As I have observed before of several of the Psalms, prepared for converted Israel, they are now to be offered in the Christian church, in believing anticipation of that event, as an intercession for Israel, until the spirit of prayer and supplication be poured forth upon this dispersed people. "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people, when he shall have mercy on his land and on his people."

^y Lev. xxvi. 38, &c.

THE FIFTH BOOK OF PSALMS,

ACCORDING TO THE HEBREW DIVISION.

The CVII. contains, The prophecy of the restoration of the Jews; CVIII. Their triumphal entrance into the land of promise; CIX. Christ betrayed; CX. His exaltation to the Father's throne; CXI. and CXII. two alphabetical Psalms; CXIII. and five following, The great Hallelujah at the Passover; CXVIII. seems a continuation; next follows the long alphabetical Psalm, CXIX. CXX. and fourteen following, are entitled songs of degrees or ascents; CXXXV. and CXXXVI. are on the exodus; CXXXVII. refers to the captives in Babylon; CXXXVIII. contains a thanksgiving for deliverance; CXXXIX. Subject, The mystical body of Christ; CXL. on, The last conflict, and also CXLI.; CXLII. A prayer of Messiah, and also CXLIII.; CXLIV. Praise for deliverance; CXLV. and the remaining Psalms are on the same subject, in connexion with the coming of Christ's kingdom, and the final deliverance of his people and redemption of the earth.

PSALM CVII.^z

- 1 WORSHIP ye Jehovah, for he is good,
For his loving kindness is everlasting.
- 2 'So' let the redeemed of Jehovah declare,
Those whom he hath redeemed from the adversary,
- 3 And whom he hath gathered from the countries,
From the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.^a
- 4 'These' wandered in the desert, in the desolate waste :
They found not the way to the city they were to dwell in :
- 5 They were hungry, and they were thirsty,
Their soul fainted within them.
- 6 But they cried unto Jehovah in their distress,
He delivered them from all their difficulties :
- 7 And he led them by the right way,
To go to the city they were to inhabit.
- 8 Let them confess to Jehovah his tender love,
And to the children of men his wonderful doings.
- 9 For he hath satisfied the craving soul,
And hath filled the hungry soul with good.

^z Horsley observes, "This Psalm consists of five principal parts ; and each part seems composed of an air for a single voice, an antiphony for the semi-choruses, and a full chorus." I have in general, though not entirely, followed his divisions.

^a The original is יָמִיִּם "And from the sea ;" to which agree all the ancient versions : and the Targum

interprets it of the *southern* sea. Hare, Secker, Kennicott, and Horsley would read יָמִיִּם "From the south." Perhaps, however, these great critics have been too hasty in their emendation of the text. It may be that the prophetic Spirit had a meaning in the designation of the south by the unusual term, when applied to that quarter, 'from the sea.'

- 10 'These' were sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death,
Being bound in affliction and iron :
- 11 Because they rebelled against the commands of El,
And had rejected the counsel of the Highest ;
- 12 Therefore was their heart humbled with trouble ;
They stumbled, and there was no helper.
- 13 But they cried unto Jehovah in their distress,
He saveth them from all their difficulties.
- 14 He brought them forth out of darkness and the shadow of
death,
And he brake asunder their fetters.
- 15 Let them confess to Jehovah his tender love,
And to the children of men, his wonderful doings.
- 16 For he hath shivered the brazen gates,
And hath cut asunder the bars of iron.
- 17 'These' foolish are refractory on the road,
And by their iniquities bring affliction on themselves ;
- 18 They loathed all manner of food,
And they came near to the gates of death.
- 19 But they cried unto Jehovah in their distress,
He saved them from all their difficulties.
- 20 He sent forth his word and healed them,
And rescued them from their own destructions.
- 21 Let them confess to Jehovah his tender love,
And to the children of men his wonderful doings.
- 22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
And declare his works with the loud peal of joy.

- 23 'These,' embarking on the sea in ships,
And performing their task on the great waters,
- 24 Beheld the works of Jehovah,
And his wonders in the deep.
- 25 When he commanded, the stormy wind arose,
And lifted up the waves on high :
- 26 They mounted to the skies, they sank to the abyss ;
Their soul melted for trouble :
- 27 They were whirled round,^b and staggered like a drunkard,
And all their skill was overwhelmed.
- 28 But they cried unto Jehovah in their distress,
And he brought them out of all their difficulties.
- 29 He made the storm a calm,
And the waves of the sea^c were hushed :
- 30 Then they rejoiced because they are stilled,
And he led them to the desired haven.
- 31 Let them confess to Jehovah his tender love,
And to the children of men his wonderful doings :
- 32 Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people,
And let them praise him in the seat of the elders.
- 33 He will turn rivers into a desert,
And springs of water into a dry soil :
- 34 —A fruitful land into a salt waste,
For the wickedness of them that inhabit it.
- 35 He will turn a desert into a lake of water,
And a parched land into water-springs ;

^b "They spin round and round."
HORSLEY.—"*Gyravit, circumactus est*
vertigine correptus." SIMON.

^c בלי הים Syriac, Hare, Hou-
bigant, and Horsley.

- 36 That he may establish there the famished,
And they may build a city for their habitation ;
- 37 And that they may sow fields and plant vineyards,
And may gather the fruits of the increase ;
- 38 And he will bless them, and they shall multiply exceedingly,
And he will not permit their cattle to be few.
- 39 When again they shall be reduced, and bowed down
Through oppression, injury, and grief.
- 40 Contempt is poured out upon princes,
And he will make them wander in a trackless waste ;
- 41 And he will raise on high the destitute out of misery,
And make him families like a flock of sheep.
- 42 The upright shall see and rejoice,
And all iniquity shall stop its mouth.
- 43 Whosoever is wise will mark these things,
Then will he understand the tender love^d of Jehovah.

^d Or, "the loving-kindnesses."

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley, whose authority I am fond of adducing, has left but a few observations that can throw any light upon the meaning of the various parts of this Psalm. I have no doubt, however, that his title has pointed out its general subject: "A Thanksgiving for the final Restoration from the Dispersion."

In the three first verses, which I should consider as the introduction, the people of God are called upon to celebrate his everlasting love: those especially, who have been the late objects of a mighty deliverance from the adversary, are summoned to join the song of praise and confession.

These are described, first of all, generally, as having been gathered from all the quarters of the globe. This

cannot refer to the redemption from Egypt; for then the gathering of the Israelites was from one quarter alone, and their only journey lay through the desert. Much less can it refer to the return from the Babylonian captivity; for that also was but in one direction, and very confined in its extent. It must therefore, refer to that day, "when the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the isles of the sea."^e When the God of Israel shall accomplish his promise: "I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather them from the west. I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."^f

The Psalm now divides itself into five parts; the four first, as it should seem, describing four divisions of the returning Israelites, and recounting the particular accidents that had befallen each party on the journey, and the particular mercies for which they ought to be thankful. The fifth part describes what befalls the collected nation, or a part of them, when they arrive at the land which was the object of their journey—I think the first restoration or colonization before the general gathering.

Whether the four divisions of travellers are supposed to come exactly from the four distinct quarters of the earth, perhaps is not quite certain. The first division are plainly described (verses 4th and 5th), as coming across the desert, and meeting with all the disasters usual on that route. "They cry to the Lord in their distress, and obtain his guidance, and the relief of their necessities." This is a description of Israel's return, so very frequently given by the Spirit of prophecy, that one is induced to suppose the main body of this dispersed people will return in this direction.

The second portion which obtain deliverance, whose situation, according to the order specified in the third verse,

^e Isaiah. xi. 11.

^f Isaiah. xliii. 5.

we must look for in the west, are described as in a state of oppression and thralldom, for their disobedience to their God, "bound in a dark dungeon, in affliction and iron:" for their deliverance, at their cry, the gates of brass are broken and the bars of iron cut asunder. As the metals brass and iron distinguish in symbolical prophecy two of the four universal empires "whose horns had scattered Judah," the Grecian and Roman empires; and as their situation is westward of the Holy Land, we are easily led to the inference, that the Spirit of Prophecy here predicts a termination of the sad captivity, and long sojourning of the Jews in these parts of the world.

The third class, whose position should be in the north, are next described. They are represented as having, by their sin and foolishness, brought extreme affliction upon themselves. The instrument of this affliction is spoken of—whether metaphorically or literally—as a pestilential sickness. But they are brought to penitence and prayer;—and God "sendeth out his word and healeth them, and delivereth them from their destructions."

The fourth division arrive by sea, either from the southern seas, as the ancient interpreter^g supposes, and as may be argued from the enumeration of the four quarters of the earth in the introduction of the Psalm, or from the seas generally, in distinction from the expeditions by land; including, probably, what Isaiah saw in his visions of the Almighty: "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel; for he has glorified thee."^h

These returning Israelites are described as much harassed in their voyage by storms and tempests: the skill of the mariners that conduct them is entirely inefficient, and all hope of escape is lost. But the miraculous interference of Providence here also appears for their deliverance. 'The

^g See Note ³.

^h Chap. lx. 8, 9.

winds and the seas obey; and they have a prosperous voyage to the desired haven. And they come to Zion to unite in the general song of praise and thanksgiving.

We now proceed to consider the fifth and last part of this remarkable prophecy, which describes what is to befall the Israelites, or a portion of them, at their first colonization in their country.

It begins (verse 33d) with a description of the injury the pleasant land had sustained, since the time when it had been the residence of their fathers; and describes the desolate state in which, at this moment, some of the fairest portions of the inheritance of the twelve tribes have been found by travellers, agreeably with the prediction of Moses: "The generation to come of your children, that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say when they see the plagues of the land,"—"and that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon,"—"even all nations shall say, Wherefore has the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, &c."¹

The same Providence, however, that has "turned the fruitful land into a salt waste," for the wickedness of them that inhabit it, at the time of their restoration will change "the barren rock of Judea," as it has been called, into a fruitful and well-watered country.

In this their restored country, as appears from the 36th and three following verses, the Israelites settle and rebuild their city, cultivate the land, and partake of its abundant increase.

However, this prosperity is once more interrupted, and perhaps, after a comparatively short interval, "again they are reduced and bowed down." The oppression and injury of an invading foe, it appears, is the cause of this last grief that the people of God shall suffer. And this explanation

¹ Deut. xxix. 22.

of the Psalm agrees exactly with Ezekiel's prophecy of Gog and Magog: "In the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel that have been always waste; but it is brought back out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee."—"Thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages, I will go up to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; to take a spoil, and to take a prey: to turn thine hand upon the desolate places, that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, to take a great spoil."

These, I conceive, are "the princes" upon whom "contempt is poured," and who "wander in a trackless waste" (verse 40th.) "Therefore, Son of Man, prophesy and say unto Gog: Thus saith the Lord God, In that day, when my people Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army: and thou shalt come against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord God: Art thou not he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days, many years that I should bring thee against them?"

Let the reader peruse the sequel in the chapters of Ezekiel. "The contempt" to be poured upon the leaders of this expedition, he will find there illustrated: and it will occur to him, that this destruction of Gog can be no other than the final overthrow of the Antichristian powers, "the beast and the kings of the earth and of the whole world," gathered "to the battle of the great day of Almighty God."

The Spirit clearly points out this: "Art thou not he of whom I have spoken in old time, by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days, many years?"^k

The more carefully, indeed, we examine these ancient prophets, the more shall we be convinced, that they had continually before their eyes, in the visions of future ages which were revealed to them, this final catastrophe of the combined world against the cause of Christ,—his miraculous interference, at his second advent, which should then occur,—and the establishment of his universal kingdom.

This, as we have seen, has been the ending of a great number of the Psalms: and there is a wonderful unity in the design of these sacred songs, when they come to be applied to their proper subjects. And it is, perhaps, among the signs of the times, that these Scriptures, for many ages obscured by mistaken interpretations, should now, after so long an interval, begin to be more generally understood by the church of Christ, at the very eve of that day when all these things must come to pass.

"Whosoever is wise will mark these things,
Then will he understand the loving-kindnesses of Jehovah."

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein: for the time is at hand."^l

^k See Pirie on the Restoration of Israel.

^l Rev. i. 3.

PSALM CVIII.

I O ELOHIM, my heart is ready,
My heart is ready, I will sing and chant.

- 2 Awake, my glory, awake ;
With psaltery and harp, let me early awake.^m
- 3 I will praise thee among the peoples,
I will chant to thee, O Jehovah, among the nations :
- 4 For thy tender love is great, even to the heavens,
And thy truth unto the skies.
- 5 Exalt thyself above the heavens, O Elohim,
Thy glory above all the earth ;
- 6 That thy beloved may be delivered,
Save with thy right hand, and hear me.
- 7 Elohim hath spoken from his sanctuary.
With joy will I portion out Shechem,
And will measure the valley of Succoth.
- 8 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine,
And Ephraim is the support of my head ;
Judah is my staff ;
- 9 Moab is the vessel for my washing ;
To Edom will I cast my sandals ;
For me Philistia raises the shout of joy.
- 10 Who will conduct me to the strong city,"
Who will lead me unto Edom ?
- 11 Is it not thou, O Elohim ? Thou who hadst rejected us,
And wouldest not go forth with our hosts.
- 12 Vouchsafe us deliverance from distress,
For vain is the help of man.
- 13 With Elohim we shall do great things,
It is he that treadeth down our enemies.

^m Or,
My heart is prepared, O Elohim,
I will sing and chant.
Aye ! with my inmost soul.
Awake ; psaltery and harp.
I would awake the morning.

ⁿ Bozrah, " city of the vintage."
Lev. xxv. 5. See on Psalm LX., or
perhaps, " city girl or pressed in siege."
Isaiah lxiii. 1—6. Comp. chap. xxxiv.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm is made up of the five last verses of the LVIIth Psalm, and the eight last of the LXth.

These Psalms began with the complaints of the great Advocate, respecting the depression of his church and people, but ended severally with a song of praise. These songs of praise are now united into one Psalm, intimating, no doubt, that the Spirit of prophecy has in view a period, when all cause of complaint shall cease; and nothing shall remain for the song of the redeemed, but praise, thanksgiving, and the shout of victory.

Again, we may remark, that the LVIIth Psalm respects more particularly the church of Christ among the Gentiles, depressed by violence, and almost ruined by the subtlety of the adversary; whilst the LXth Psalm describes the difficulties which Israel after the flesh should have to encounter in the way of their restoration. Both the Jewish and Gentile churches are severally comforted by the anticipation of glorious times to come. In the Psalm now before us, the songs of praise are united together to compose one triumphant Psalm. How plainly does this intimate, that, whatever particular deliverances are predicted of Israel; yet the universal church is most nearly concerned in these mercies, and at the last there will be but "one flock under one Shepherd!" remembering always the higher hope of our calling, who believe in the righteousness of God our Saviour, and who are bidden, at this period as "the children of the resurrection" to expect that we shall "appear with the Lord in glory."

PSALM CIX.

- 1 O ELOHIM, the theme of my praise, refuse not to hear ;
 2 For the mouth of wickedness
 And the mouth of deceit are opened against me.
 They have talked with me with a false tongue ;
 3 They have surrounded me with words of hatred ;
 They fought against me without a cause.
 4 In return for my love they have become mine enemies,
 And I am an abhorrence.^o
 5 And they requite me evil for good,
 And hatred for my love.
 6 Let wickedness be visited upon *HIM*,
 And let Satan stand at his right hand.^p
 7 On his trial let him come forth condemned,^q
 And let the decision be, For sin :^r
 8 Let his days be shortened ;
 Let another receive his charge ;
 9 Let his children be orphans,
 And his wife a widow ;

^o "A thing reproached and condemned."

^p "Give thou the evil one charge over him ; i. e. give this people up to the devil's persecution ; let him have the direction of their fortunes." Br. HORSLEY. I think, however, that the leading notion of this passage is, that the great "accuser of the brethren" is to be permitted to bring his accusation against the object of this imprecation, whoever it is, and justice is to take its course.

^q "רשע one that has an unrighteous or unjust cause before a court of justice."—GESENIUS.

^r Bishop Horsley's exposition of this line is certainly ingenious, "Let his prayer be turned into sin."—"The Jewish worship is now become sin, and it contains a standing denial of our Lord." But תפלה from its etymology, and from its usage, Job xvi. 17, may be understood to mean a judicial sentence : and the parallelism in this place strongly argues for such an interpretation. Let the decision on him be, "Guilty."

- 10 Let his children be mere vagabonds, and beg,
Let them be expelled from their ruined habitations ;^s
- 11 Let the creditor seize upon all that he hath,
And let strangers take his labours for a prey :
- 12 Let there be none to extend kindness to him,
And let there be no one to show favour to his orphans ;
- 13 Let his posterity be cut off,
And in the next generation let their name be extinct ;
- 14 Let the iniquity of his father be had in remembrance with
Jehovah,
And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out ;
- 15 Let them be before Jehovah continually,
That he may cut off their memory from the earth :
- 16 Inasmuch as he remembered not to show kindness,
But persecuted the afflicted, and destitute,
And broken-hearted even unto death.
- 17 Since he loved a curse, therefore let it come upon him ;
Since he desired not a blessing, let it be far from him ;
- 18 Since he hath clothed himself with a curse as with a garment,
Let it penetrate his entrails like water, and like oil his bones ;
- 19 Let it be to him as the vest that wrappeth him,
And as the girdle with which he is continually girded.
- 20 This is the reward of mine adversaries^t from Jehovah,
And of them that speak evil against my soul :
- 21 But thou, Jehovah, 'art' my Lord,
Act for me for thy name sake ;
Because of thy abundant tenderness^u deliver me :
- 22 For I am poor and destitute,
And my heart is wounded within me ;

^s See Horsley, who adopts the reading of the LXX.

^t Or, "my adversary."
^u "Rich exuberance."

- 23 I am departing like the lengthening shadow,^v
I am wafted away^{*} as the locust.⁷
- 24 My knees are weak through fasting,
And my flesh hath lost its fatness.
- 25 And I am become a reproach unto them,
They look upon me and shake their heads.
- 26 Help me, O Jehovah, my Elohim,
Save me according to thy tender love ;
- 27 And let them know that this is thy hand,
That thou, Jehovah, hast done it :
- 28 They may curse, but thou wilt bless ;
They stand up and are ashamed, but thy servant shall rejoice.
- 29 Mine adversaries shall be clothed with shame,
Their disgrace shall cover them as a cloak.
- 30 I will greatly extol Jehovah with my mouth,
I will praise him in the midst of multitudes :
- For he will stand at the right hand of the destitute,
To save him from those who have judged him.^z

^v "Like the shadow stretched to its utmost length."—"The state of the shadows of terrestrial objects, at sunset, lengthening every instant, and growing faint as they lengthen, and in the instant that they shoot to an immeasurable length, disappearing."

^{*} Or, "shaken off."

⁷ Dr. Shaw (Travels, page 187), speaking of the swarms of locusts

which he saw near Algiers, says, "When the wind blew briskly, so that these swarms were crowded by others, we had a lively idea of that comparison of the Psalmist, of 'being tossed up and down like the locust.'" PARK-HURST. The meaning of both comparisons is, that he was powerless before his persecuting enemies.

^z "Condemned him to death."

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm, called by the ancients the Iscariotic Psalm, we know from Acts, i. 20, to relate to Judas Iscariot, and to have been composed by David: "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David, spake before

concerning Judas, which was the guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem: insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, *Aceldama*, that is to say, the field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, *Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and, his bishoprick let another take.*"

This exposition of the Apostle says, that the Holy Ghost spake in this Psalm concerning Judas; nor have we any intimation here, or elsewhere, that it has the least allusion to Doeg, Ahithophel, or any other personal enemy of David. And all supposition of this sort is perfectly gratuitous, and very incongruous to the proper meaning of these prophetic Scriptures. It has with greater probability been supposed, that the Jewish nation in general, as well as Judas, is included in the curse. But upon the whole, I dissent from this interpretation. No doubt the first five verses describe the injurious treatment of our Lord, which he received from the Jews generally; but the imprecations which begin in the 6th verse, to the 20th, single out an individual; and some things in the language of the curse do not agree with the destiny of the Jewish nation at large, particularly verse the 13th: "Let his posterity be cut off; and in the next generation, let their name be extinct." This might be true of the traitor's family; but very different was the fate of Israel: "They did not stumble that they might fall." I conceive, therefore, that the whole of the imprecation relates to "him that was the guide to them that took Jesus."

The 6th and 7th verses describe, under the metaphor of a human tribunal, before which the prisoner stands with his accuser, the inward convictions of the wretched Judas, and the awful manner in which his own conscience impels him to proclaim the sentence passed upon him, and drives him in the horrors of guilt to become his own executioner.

His days were shortened, and his apostleship was given to another.

We have no records to inform us what became of the family of Iscariot; but, no doubt, the Psalm before us, gives us the true description of their unhappy fate. The case of Judas is an instance to show, that the covetousness of parents can store up nothing that is blessed for their children: and I am forcibly led to conclude, that this fate of Judas, with the misery entailed upon his family, is intended to be a warning and example for all that tread in the steps of Judas—for all ministers of religion, who, high in office in the visible church, betray “for filthy lucre’s sake,” the cause of their Master: and perhaps, though in these days the instances must be very rare, found a family with the fruits of their sacrilegious gains. The records of private families are seldom preserved: so that little is known of the history of those families who owe their affluence to the treachery of some ambitious or avaricious churchman.

The 20th verse seems, indeed, to state, that there is a general ensample and precedent in the awful fate of Judas and his family.

The Psalm concludes with a most striking picture of the afflicted Jesus, when in consequence of Judas’s treachery he was led to judgment and to death, amidst the taunts and reproaches of the Jews, on the decision of his unrighteous judges.

They, then, “esteemed him stricken of God, and afflicted;” but they, as a nation, will one day be brought to see the deed of which they have been guilty; then shall they be covered with shame and confusion, when they shall see Jesus, whom they condemned and crucified, now exalted at the right-hand of God, coming in his glory as “the Holy One of Israel.” “They shall look on Him whom they pierced, and shall wail because of him.”

PSALM CX.*

- 1 THUS spake Jehovah to my Lord,
 "Sit thou on my right hand,
 Until I shall make^b thine enemies
 The stool for thy feet."
- 2 Jehovah will send forth the sceptre of thy power from Zion,
 Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.
- 3 The willing concourse of thy people is great^c in the day of thy
 power
 On the holy hills:^d
- 'Greater' than from the womb of the morning
 Is the dew of thy progeny.
- 4 Jehovah has sworn and will not repent,
 "Thou art a Priest for ever."
- 5 After the order^e of Melchizedec
 'Is' my Lord at thy right hand.
- Kings hath HE smitten in the day of his wrath,
 6 HE shall contend with the nations filling 'all' with dead bodies,
 HE hath smitten the head of a great country;^f

* "This Psalm is expounded of the Messiah in the Targum, by Moses Hadarsan and Saadiah Gaon; by Isaac Ben Aramah in Midrash Tehillim, and in the Gamera. HUET. *Dem. Ev. Prop. vii.*" HORSLEY.

^b Or, "shall be about to make."

^c More literally, "Thy people are rich overflowings." The allusion is to the rising sap of plants. נִדְבֵּךְ conveys the ideas, both of *copious effusion*, and *spontaneity of action*.

^d Literally, "The eminences of the

sanctuary." For this meaning of הַדְרִים see Isaiah xlv. 2. If, however, we adopt the more received interpretation, it will amount to nearly the same thing. The *beauty* or *glory* of *holiness*, plainly denotes the glorious sanctuary of the tabernacle of God.

^e "According to the matters" (viz. that are recorded) "of Melchizedec." PARKHURST.

^f Or, according to an ancient reading very generally received: "the head of mighty ones upon the earth."

7 *HE* shall drink of the Nile on the way,^g

Therefore shall he lift high his head.

^g I consider נַחַל here as a proper name. There may indeed be something of metaphor in the application of the term to so large a stream: Parkhurst observes, "From the Hebrew נַחַל is plainly derived the Greek Νεῖλος, Lat. *Nilus*, and Eng. *Nile*." The express meaning of the Hebrew term is, a low, hollow valley, with a stream running through the midst, by which it is occasionally overflowed.

The channels of most streams that issue from the mountains answer to this description: and the whole land of Egypt may be considered as a channel of a mountain torrent on a larger scale, whose stream usually flows quietly in the midst of it, but is subject to its periodical overflowings. However, the word is usual for watered valleys generally. Ps. civ.

EXPOSITION.

We have so many scriptural helps to the exposition of this Psalm, that none can mistake its meaning. Our Lord himself refers to this Psalm in his conversation with the Jews: "What think ye of Christ?" or "of the Messiah? whose son is he? They say to him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?* If David then call him Lord, how is he his Son?"^h St. Paul also, referring to this Psalm, says, "But to which of the angels said he at any time, *Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?*" And he at the same time identifies the subject of this Psalm with that of the II^d, the XLVth, CII^d, and CXVIIth.

The 2d and 3d verses evidently refer to the future establishment of Messiah's kingdom: and Zion is to be the seat of that dominion, and "Jerusalem the city of the great King." Zion and Jerusalem may perhaps sometimes bear an application to the scene of the Saviour's mediatorial intercessions in heaven, yet the kingdom of Christ is to be manifested on earth, and "the Jerusalem which is above, is to come down out of heaven," and several Scriptures seem to assign its locality to the former chosen residence of the divine Presence. God has said indeed, "Here will I dwell for ever."

^h Matt. xxii. 41—45.

The multitude of happy spirits that shall then descend upon the holy hills, are compared, for number, to the drops of dew which the morning discovers on the earth. Who these people are, that shall be with the Son of Man, when he cometh in the clouds of heaven, we cannot mistake. "Those that are asleep in Christ, shall God bring with him. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord."

From this passage we discover who they are, of whom the Spirit speaks by the mouth of Zechariah;ⁱ when, after saying, "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against all these nations"—"and his feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east;" he further says, "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." And again: "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." The parallel passages will occur to the reader: for this is the perpetual theme of these sacred songs.

The eternal priesthood of Christ, and the peculiar character of his ministry, is next announced in the Psalm. And on the subject of this priesthood, its superiority to the Aaronical priesthood, and how this latter is superseded by it, we may see at large, in the 6th and 7th chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Apostle refers particularly to this portion of the Psalm before us.

One grand distinction in the character of this priesthood, the subject of the Psalm demands that we keep in view—It is a priesthood "after the order of Melchizedec." Now Melchizedec, we know, united in the same person the functions both of a priest of the sanctuary, and of the kingly office. He was not only to "offer gifts and sacrifices for sins;" but also, to "be the captain of the Lord's people;"—"by whose hand" and under whose conduct, "the Lord would give them rest" from all their enemies.

Messiah's execution of this part of his high office is

ⁱ Chap. xiv.

especially the subject of the remainder of the Psalm. At the time appointed, until which he sits at the right hand of the Majesty on High, the Royal Priest cometh forth to execute, as king, the work of vengeance on his adversaries. He visits "the kings of the earth upon the earth;" and "the slain of the Lord are many."^k Nor is it possible to hesitate in the interpretation, that "the head over the mighty ones," or "over the great country," is THE ANTICHRIST—"the fourth beast" of Daniel's vision.

To illustrate from a more recent prophecy: "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together to the supper of the great God: that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all, free and bond, small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image: these both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth."

With respect to the last verse, as we have it usually translated, "He shall drink of the brook by the way, therefore shall he lift up his head," nothing, I believe, has ever been satisfactorily advanced for its interpretation. But, understanding נָרִיץ as a proper name, and the subject of the verse to be "the head over the great country," observe how well it agrees with the known facts of the fulfilment of this prophecy.

Daniel, or rather the angel interpreter that addresses himself to the prophet in the xith chapter, has clearly fore-shown that one circumstance in the last conflict, on the eve

^k Isaiah lxvi. 16. Comp. Jer. xxv. 33.

of the second advent, will be the seizing of Egypt by the bestial power: by which circumstance his heart is elated, and he becomes infuriated to his destruction. But I need not quote the passage, as we have already had recourse to it for the exposition of the latter part of the LXVIIIth Psalm, which will be found to coincide exactly with the prophecy before us.

הללו יה

PSALM CXI.

- 1 א I WILL celebrate Jehovah with my whole heart,
ב In the secret council of the upright,¹ and in the congregation.
- 2 ג Great are the works of Jehovah,
ד Sought out^m of all them that have pleasure therein.
- 3 ה With what glory and majesty is his work!
ו And his righteous judgments stand fast for ever.
- 4 ז He hath appointed a memorial of his wonderful doings;
ח Jehovah is gracious and compassionate:
- 5 ט He gave food to them that fear him,
י He remembereth his covenant for ever:
- 6 כ He showed to his people the power of his works,
ל That he might give them the heritage of the heathen.
- 7 מ The works of his hands are truth and judgment,
נ All his mandates are firm;
- 8 ס They are established for ever and ever,
ע They are made in truth and equity.
- 9 פ He sent deliverance to his people,
צ He hath decreed his covenant for ever.

¹ "Recte observat Aben Ezra עדה ventui."
oppositum esse טו secretiori con-

^m "Sought out," or "the study of."

10 ק Holy and awful is his name :

ך The beginning of wisdom is the fear of Jehovah.

11 ש An excellent knowledge have all they that do his commands :

ך His praise endureth for ever.

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley entitles this Psalm, "A Hymn of Praise, perhaps, for the Feast of Pentecost." The title in the Syriac is very remarkable, "Without a name, concerning the glorious virtues of the works of God; but it exhorts us to give thanks to Christ; and it is said in the person of the Apostles." I see no reason, however, why we should not suppose it spoken in the person of our great Advocate, from whose lips the church may receive this song of praise, and learn to repeat it after him.—He will celebrate Jehovah, in the secret assembly or council, and in the congregation—with his people, perhaps, in their secret retreats here on earth, during the reign of Antichrist, and also in "the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven." The wonders that Jehovah has wrought for his people, with especial reference to the ancient history of Israel, is the general theme: for in this divinely penned history we find instances of God's goodness, and precedents of his interference, which are to stand on record for the encouragement of his church throughout all ages.

His signs and tokens which he wrought in Egypt, I suppose to be particularly in view in the 2d and 3d verses. The 4th verse refers to that memorial of the wonderful grace of Jehovah, when the Lord descended in a cloud on Mount Sinai, whither Moses had gone up to meet him, "and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord"—"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth," &c.ⁿ

The supply of manna in the desert, and the conquest of Canaan, is next recorded in order: and the remainder of the Psalm intimates that all this was in virtue of a covenant

ⁿ Exod. xxxiv. 5, &c.

which God has made with his people, a covenant which is to stand for ever, and the wonderful effects of which, his people that fear his name and abide by his covenant, may expect to find throughout all generations. All these covenant engagements with Israel are but a part and parcel of the everlasting covenant for the glorifying of his saints, and the reconciling of the world.

חללה יה

PSALM CXII.

- 1 א Most blessed is the man that hath feared Jehovah,
ב He 'who' hath had great delight in his commandments :
- 2 ג His seed shall be great on the earth,
ד The generation of the upright shall be blessed.
- 3 ה Wealth and riches are in his house,
ו And his right is established for ever.
- 4 ז There ariseth^o in darkness a light for the upright,
ח He is gracious, compassionate, and righteous ;
- 5 ט A man, pleasant, gracious, and kind,^p
י He weigheth his words,^q with judgment.
- 6 כ Truly he shall never be moved,
כא The Just One is held in everlasting remembrance :
- 7 לב He shall not be afraid of the tidings of evil,
לג His heart is firm, trusting in Jehovah :
- 8 לד His heart is fixed, he shall not fear,
לה Until he shall look 'in triumph' on his enemies.
- 9 לו He hath dispersed, he hath given to the destitute,
לז His righteousness^r is established for ever.

^o Or, "He ariseth."

^p "Ready to lend—generous."

^q Or we may render, "He refraineth his words;" or, "he will sustain

his words; i. e. will fulfil his promises." "He maintains his cause before the tribunal." GZENTIUS.

^r Or "right cause."

- 10 ק His horn is exalted in glory,
 7 The wicked 'one' shall see it and grieve :
 11 ש He shall gnash his teeth and consume away ;
 7 The desire of the wicked shall perish.

EXPOSITION.

We have in this Psalm the picture of a just and perfect man, one that is an example, both of benevolence and kindness towards men, and of faithfulness and confidence towards God. The righteousness of the Mediator, I make no doubt, is celebrated here ; for surely that alone is worthy to be extolled in songs of praise : especially, since we are taught by the Holy Ghost to say, "I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."

The Apostle has, indeed, quoted the 9th verse of this Psalm as an exhortation to almsgiving ; but this is no conclusive argument that the Psalm treats not primarily of Christ, since the example of our Lord, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich, has laid upon his people the greatest of all obligations to show mercy to the poor.

And, again, if we suppose the godly life of a believer to be the object of the panegyric, it becomes impossible to show the truth of the promises, "His seed shall be great upon earth"—"Wealth and riches are in his house ;" but suppose the Saviour's righteousness to be the subject celebrated, and his spiritual seed those to whom the promises are made, "that they shall inherit the earth," and all is easy to be understood, and accords with numberless passages in the Psalms and in the other Scriptures. "The JUST ONE is exalted, and the WICKED is consumed with the spirit of his mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of his coming." (Ver. 10, 11.)

I conclude, therefore, that in this alphabetical Psalm, for such is its construction, Christ is "the Alpha and the Omega" here also.

PSALM CXIII.^s

- 1 PRAISE, O ye servants of Jehovah,
Praise ye the name of Jehovah ;
- 2 Blessed be the name of Jehovah,
Henceforth, even for ever.
- 3 From the rising of the sun to its going down,
The name of Jehovah is the theme of praise.
- 4 Jehovah is exalted over all nations,
His glory above the heavens.
- 5 Who is like to Jehovah, our El ?
That hath his habitation on high ;
- 6 That stoopeth low to show regard,
In heaven and in earth.
- 7 Raising up one exhausted from the dust,
Lifting up a poor destitute from the dunghill ;
- 8 That he may set him with princes,
With the princes of his people.
- 9 Leading a barren woman to her home,^t
A rejoicing mother of children.

Praise ye Jehovah.

^s The great Hallel. According to the Jews, this and the five following Psalms were sung at the passover ; and is accordingly supposed to have been the hymn which our Lord, on that

occasion, is said to have sung with his disciples.

^t "As in a bridal procession, takes her to dwell."

EXPOSITION.

This appears to be a song of praise, like many of the foregoing Psalms, in anticipation of the universal kingdom of Christ. He, I conceive, is "the highly Exalted," who now sitteth in the midst of his princes, "the First-born

among many brethren :” but the same Jesus had been once, in the days of his flesh, a poor man exhausted with misery, and might well be described as a mourner, in the most abject circumstances of grief, according to the custom of ancient times, “as sitting on a dunghill.”^u

“The barren woman led home to her house a joyful mother of children,” is a type of the church in the last days, at the period of the glorious advent; in allusion, no doubt, to the barrenness of Sarah. See the XLVth Psalm and the Song of Hannah ^x (1 Sam. ii.), but especially Isaiah,

^u See Job ii. 8.

^x As the inspired song of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, evidently treats of the same grand theme that runs throughout the Psalms—the future exaltation of the once afflicted Saviour, and the final excision of the wicked—I venture to subjoin a translation :

“And Hannah prophesied, and said :

My heart hath exulted in Jehovah,

My horn was erected in Elohim :

My mouth was opened over mine enemy,

When I rejoiced in thy salvation.

There is none holy as Jehovah,

Truly there is none besides thee,

And there is no protector like our Elohim.

Talk not so very proudly,

Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth ;

For Jehovah is an Elohim that discerneth,

And by him actions are weighed.*

The bow of the mighty was stayed,†

And the enfeebled were girded with strength ;

Those that were full have been hired for bread,

And they that hungered have relinquished ‡ the prey :

The barren woman hath borne seven,

And she that was fruitful in children hath drooped.§

Jehovah killeth, and maketh alive,

He causeth to go down to hades, and bringeth up :

Jehovah maketh poor and maketh rich,

He humbleth and he exalteth.

He raiseth up from the dust a poor exhausted ‘one,’

He exalteth from the ashes ‘one’ most wretched :

* For לִּי the versions have יָלִי † Literally, “sealed up.”

† See the Arab. جَدَسَ *contempsit, reliquit.*

§ As a plant blasted or dried up.

liv. and Galatians, iv. 27, compared with the last chapters of the Revelation.

That he may be seated with 'his' princes;
 Ay, a glorious throne he causeth them to inherit;
 For the pillars of the earth are Jehovah's,
 And he hath placed the world upon them.
 He keepeth the feet of his beloved,
 And the wicked are silent in darkness;
 For not by strength can man prevail:
 They that contend with Jehovah are broken to pieces:
 He thundereth over them in the heavens,
 Jehovah judgeth the utmost parts of the earth;
 And he hath given strength to his king,
 And hath erected the horn of his Anointed."

PSALMS CXIV. AND CXV.^y

- 1 WHEN Israel came out of Egypt,
 The house of Jacob from among the strange people ;^z
- 2 Judah was HIS consecrated 'portion,'
 Israel was HIS dominion.
- 3 The sea saw and fled,
 The Jordan turned back.
- 4 The mountains skipped like rams,
 The swelling heights like the lambs of the flock.
- 5 What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleest ?^a
 O Jordan, that thou turnest back ?

^y The ancient versions consider the CXIVth and CXVth as one Psalm.

Parkhurst and Horsley.

^z Or, "a tyrannical people." See

^a Or, "shouldst flee."

6 Ye mountains, that ye skip like rams?
Ye swelling heights, like the lambs of the flock?

7 Tremble,^b O earth! before the presence of the Lord,^c
Before the presence of the Eloah of Jacob:

8 Of him who turned the rock into a pool of water,
The flinty rock into fountains of water.

CXV.

1 Not for our sake, O Jehovah, not for our sake,
Surely for thy name sake give the glory;^d
According to thy tender love, according to thy truth.

2 Why should the nations say,
Where is now their Elohim?

3 Whereas, our Elohim "who is" in the heavens,
Hath wrought all His pleasure.

4 Their idols are silver and gold,
The work of the hands of man:

5 They have a mouth, but they speak not;
They have eyes, but they see not;

6 They have ears, but they hear not;
They have nostrils, but they smell not:

7 Their hands, too, they cannot touch;
And their feet, they cannot walk;
Neither breathe they through their throat.

8 Like them shall be they who make them,
Every one that putteth his trust in them.

9 The house of Israel trusted in Jehovah:
He was their help and their shield.

^b "With pangs as of a woman
in labour."

^c Or, "sovereign."

^d Or "appoint," or, "display thy
glory."

- 10 The house of Aaron trusted in Jehovah :
He was their help and their shield.
- 11 They that feared Jehovah, trusted in Jehovah :
He was their helper and their shield.
- 12 Jehovah hath remembered us, he will bless us :
He will bless the house of Israel :
He will bless the house of Aaron :
- 13 He will bless them that fear Jehovah,
The small and the great.
- 14 Jehovah will increase * ' his blessing ' upon you more and more,
Upon you and upon your children.
- 15 Ye are the blessed of Jehovah,
Maker of heaven and earth.
- 16 The heavens are heavens of Jehovah,
And the earth hath he given to the sons of Adam.
- 17 It is not the dead^f that shall praise Jah,
Nor any who go down into silence :
- 18 But as for us, we shall bless Jah
From henceforth, even for ever.
- Hallelujah.

* Multiply or add to.

^f "What though the dead?" HOS. xv.

EXPOSITION.

The ancient versions consider the CXIVth and CXVth as one Psalm; which on a careful inspection appears to be a true state of the case. All indeed have felt the incompleteness of the CXIVth taken by itself. The two taken together form a most beautiful and perfect poem: the subject is a theme not unfrequent in these Sacred Songs.

Israel expecting a second Exodus, and assured that a no less manifestation of Divine power than that which

marked their coming up out of Egypt, shall in that day be displayed in their final deliverance from their incredulous enemies. The Psalm accordingly opens with a record of the marvellous things their fathers had witnessed in the desert. These grand and spirited allusions to their former mercies need no comment. Their application to the present hope of Israel is found in the seventh and following verse: "Tremble, O earth;" or, Be in pangs like a woman in travail; implying an expectation, grounded on the promises of their covenanted God; that the same mighty Protector will appear again for their final deliverance and everlasting triumph—will appear not as the tutelar God of that nation only, but as the "Lord of all;" and not the waters and mountains of the Arabian desert only, but the whole earth shall see and own with trembling his presence. "For thus saith the Lord of Hosts; yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts." Hag. ii. 6, 7.

And this comparison of spiritual things with spiritual affords a right impression of what the Holy Ghost means when he dictated to his long waiting people, the prayer and pleadings in the CXVth Psalm. We perceive what "the giving of the glory" is, on which they are to build all their hopes; we learn how connected with this shaking of the earth and the "dwelling of glory" in the Holy Land is the final deliverance of the remnant of Israel from the idolatrous nations. "And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen," &c. Verse 21, 22. We learn, moreover, with what arguments they are to press their petitions for so distinguished and mighty salvation—"Not for our sake," &c. And how wretched and despicable for the most part is this people, as seen in the place of their dispersion at the present time among the nations. "And when they entered unto the heathen whither they went, they profaned my holy name; when they said to them, **These are the people of the Lord and are gone forth out of**

his land." "But I had pity for mine holy name. Therefore say unto the House of Israel, saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O House of Israel, but for my name's sake." Ezekiel xxxvi. 21. Compare the close of the prophecy of Haggai, and many other passages that describe the character of this nation at the time of their obtaining mercy. But notwithstanding their debased moral character, the Jews are, in a certain sense, witnesses for the one only true God, the only object of trust and pure worship. Wherever they wander, whether among pagans or apostate and idolatrous Christians, who have made to themselves graven images the likenesses of things in heaven and earth; and to this hour bow down to them and worship them, to the scandal even of the blaspheming Jew—ay, and multitudes forsaking the one Mediator, "not holding the Head," do put their trust in them to their everlasting shame and confusion. But as we read in many prophecies when the uncircumcised heart of Israel be humbled, as in verses 9, 10, 11, they will remember the examples of their pious forefathers who put their trust in Jehovah and were helped; then God will remember them, and bless them (verses 12, 13); will multiply his blessings upon them in a manner far exceeding all that their fathers had enjoyed, and under a new covenant where the work of the Spirit ensures obedience, these blessings are to be extended to their children for ever (verses 14, 15). Thus in Abraham and his seed shall all the surviving families of the earth be blessed.

But the pious believer of the Gospel Church, waiting for the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, must bear in mind, that this and what follows in the last verses, is not descriptive of the hope of his calling, or of the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the Saints. In the heavens of Jehovah (verse 16) is their portion to sit with him upon his throne, and to share in his royal and priestly dominion over all the creation. But the prophecy before us presents to our view the new earth as given to the sons of Adam, who still "bear the image of the earthy." In this connection alone are we enabled to point out the true meaning of the two last verses. The state of things here contemplated

by the Psalmist, we know from our Lord's own words: "In those days shall be affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be, and except the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved, but for the elect's sake whom he hath chosen, He hath shortened those days." Mark xiii. 19, 20. This too "is the time of Jacob's trouble, but He shall be delivered out of it," and out of this, "the great tribulation," the remnants of mankind which are spared, come.

Now in these circumstances, we perceive plainly that to be rescued from death and to be permitted to live upon the earth, is the salvation afforded.

Verse 17. "It is not the dead that shall praise Jah, nor any of them that go down into silence, but we shall bless Jah from henceforth even for ever." The use of the name "Jah" in this passage is to be marked; some regard it as only an abbreviation of Jehovah, but as I have already observed, I think it particularly applies to Jehovah as manifested in the Incarnation of the Christ, equivalent to the *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* of the New Testament, and is here to be referred to the second coming of Christ in His glory.

The prayer of king Hezekiah when He had been sick, and had recovered, may throw light upon the subject, which may perhaps be thus rendered:

"I said in the cutting off of my days,
I am going to the gates of hades,
I am deprived of the residue of my years.
I said, I shall not see Jah,
Jah in the land of the living.
I shall behold man no more,
With the inhabitants of the world, &c."

ISAIAH xxxviii. 10.

This may be considered as symbolical of a dying Israelite, cut off from the hope of seeing their ever-expected Messiah in the land of living men.

For the illustration of the last verse, we need only refer to the last chapter of Isaiah, especially verses 22 and 23.

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord."

PSALM CXVI.

- 1 I WAS well pleased^e that Jehovah should hear the voice of my petition,
- 2 That he should incline his ear unto me :
- 3 For in the days when I called, the cords of death had surrounded me,^h
The nets of hadesⁱ had caught hold upon me.
- 4 I found distress and agony, and I called upon the name of Jehovah,
"Jehovah, I beseech thee rescue my soul."
- 5 Gracious is Jehovah and righteous ;
Ay, our Elohim is compassionate.
- 6 Jehovah preserveth the weak ;^j
I was brought low, but he delivered me.

^e Grateful, or full of love.

^h The original word מַצָּר expresses the repetition of the encircling of the toils—they surrounded him again and again.

ⁱ Or, according to the usual meaning of יָרַר and נָרַר "the pangs or pains of hell." It is not impossible, indeed, that it should be derived from נָרַר; we might then render, "The purveyors of Hades had found me:" and the imagery, at any rate, seems to be taken from the toils of the hunter. Michaelis would read מַצָּרֵי "nets:" but it is very probable that, without any change, מַצָּרֵי signifies some

part of the apparatus of hunting. "מַצָּר a strait, distress, angustia." Psalm cxviii. 5 : cxvi. 3 ; Lam. i. 3. In which last text Mr. Lowth says, that "there is a metaphor from those that hunt a prey, which they drive into some strait and narrow passage, from whence there is no making an escape."

^j The usual meaning of פְּרָאִים is *simplices, fatui, persuasui faciles* : but I believe the septuagint has preserved the true meaning^e of the passage: Φυλάσσω τὰ νήπια ὁ κύριος. The leading idea of פְּרָאִים is *laxity* or *yielding*, and may as well apply to the weakness of the body or of the facul-

- 7 Return to thy rest, my soul ;
For Jehovah hath given thee thy reward :
- 8 For THOU hast delivered my soul from death,
Mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling.
- 9 That I should walk before Jehovah
In the lands of the living, I believed,^k
- 10 Assuredly can I declare.
- As for me, I was greatly afflicted ;^l
- 11 As for me, I said in my haste,
The whole of man is a lie.^m
- 12 What return shall I make to Jehovah ?
All his rewards are upon me.
- 13 I will take the cup of deliverance,ⁿ
And will call upon the name of Jehovah.
- 14 I will discharge my vows to Jehovah,
Even in the presence of all his people.
- 15 Precious in the sight of Jehovah
Is the death of his BELOVED ones.
- 16 Jehovah, truly I am thy servant ;
I am thy servant, the son of thy handmaid ;
Thou hast loosened my bonds.

ties of the mind under the pressure of grief and pain, as to the relaxing of the powers of the understanding in yielding to the seductions of folly or vice. פתתי *latus et latus fuit* (*latus fuit*, Syr. Chald. *latus* " *fuit* ; unde Samar. פתתי, *latitudo*, et Aphel dilatavit). In the parallel line it is דליתי "I was brought low," or, more literally, "I was exhausted."

^k Perhaps,

"I trusted that I should speak,
And tell the tale of my deliverance."

^l Or "subdued." Comp. 2 Cor. i. & c.

^m Or, "The entire of the manhood is a lie," or, as the word we render lie, signifies a thing *failing* and disappointing the hopes built upon it, Horsley has rendered, "In an ecstasy of despair I said, The whole race of

man is a delusion"—"a *deception*, a *lie*, a *cheat*, a *thing of nothing*, a *falling short*. So Mudge understands this latter part : he judiciously observes, that the prefixed ה necessarily determines the phrase כל האדם to the collective sense of the whole race. *Every man*, or *all men*, should be כל אדם without ה. The 10th and 11th verses may be differently, and perhaps more correctly rendered thus :

I believed, therefore do I speak ;
For me, I was greatly afflicted ;
For me, I said in my haste,
The whole of man is a delusion.

ⁿ "This cup of salvation is the drink-offering annexed to, and poured upon, the sacrifice, &c." JOSEPHUS MENE. But see Psalm xxiii. 5. The cup which welcomes a guest.

- 17 I will sacrifice the sacrifice of praise,
I will call upon the name of Jehovah ;
- 18 I will pay my vows to Jehovah,
Even in the presence of all his people,
- 19 In the courts of the house of Jehovah,
In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.

Praise ye Jehovah.

EXPOSITION.

The death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the pains he suffered in his death, with the glorious deliverance that he obtained from the hand of hell, although he all the while sustained the character of the sinner's Surety, are the subjects of this Psalm. And this exposition will appear to be corroborated, if we carefully consider the manner in which St. Paul has introduced a quotation from the 10th verse in 2 Cor. iv. Perhaps however we are to extend our view to his mystical body the church at those periods when the gates of hell seem to be prevailing against it.

The Spirit of prophecy anticipates a season when the holy soul of Jesus, for the sins of his people, should sink into the midst of the abyss of hades, overwhelmed in pain and misery, and should answer to the circumstances of his type, Jonah: "I cried by reason of my affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice;" and as St. Peter has told us, speaking of the Redeemer who "was crucified and slain"—"whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."^o

It is this deliverance the rising Saviour celebrates, in the 6th and following verses; and, I think, it might be fairly inferred from the manner of expression in the 8th verse, that the distress denoted by tears and the stumbling of the foot, was something posterior to the departure of the soul

^o Acts ii. 24.

from the body—that the holy Victim for our sins was for a season, though a short season, cast “into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

But the bands or pains of death being loosed, He walks before Jehovah in the land, or, as the received copies read it, in the lands of the living; by which, perhaps, is meant not only this land of the living, where he showed himself alive after his resurrection, appearing at intervals during forty days; but other lands of the living, where those that had departed hence in the Lord “lived unto God,” and being gathered to their fathers, found that God was preparing for them a city.

We now come to the 10th and following verse, the former of which St. Paul has quoted. Here the human soul of Jesus, now a glorified spirit—“the first-begotten from the dead,” “the first fruits of them that slept,” refers to the deep distress and misery he had felt in the days of his flesh—his dreadful state of alarm, when in the midst of those *untold torments* the lower nature he had assumed seemed unable to sustain his punishment. Notwithstanding all this, however, the faith of our victorious Champion did not fail, and by this he conquered: and when he “was made perfect through sufferings,” he could speak the praises of his God, who had delivered him from death. And “we,” says the Apostle, where he is speaking of the desperate dangers to which he and his brother Apostles were exposed, so that he could only look for deliverance in the resurrection of the dead—“we,” he says, “always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith, as it is written, *I believed and therefore have I spoken*: we believe, and therefore speak: knowing, that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.”

The remainder of the Psalm is very similar to other portions of these sacred songs, where the grateful soul of

the risen Saviour is represented as offering up his praises to his heavenly Father in the midst of the assembly of his redeemed, in the courts of the tabernacle above, in the new Jerusalem, the inheritance incorruptible, reserved in heaven, ready to be revealed in the last day.

PSALM CXVII.

- 1 PRAISE Jehovah, all ye nations,
Laud him, all ye tribes of men ;
- 2 For his tender love is great towards us,
The faithfulness^p of Jehovah is everlasting.

Praise ye Jehovah.

^p "Truth here, as in other places, is the constancy of God's favour and affection." HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

Whether we consider this as a distinct Psalm, or, with some of the later commentators, as a mere exordium to the following Psalm, it appears to be an address of the church of God, or more properly of her Great Advocate, calling upon all the nations of the earth, to worship Jehovah. St. Paul quotes a passage from this Psalm, and from several others, to show, "that Jesus Christ was indeed a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: but that also the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, *For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.* And again he saith, *Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.* And again, *Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.* And again Esaias saith, *There shall be a root*

of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust."^a From a comparison of these passages it will clearly appear, that it is the final display of mercy to the Jewish people, that the Holy Spirit has in view in this Psalm, with the universal reign of Christ upon earth, which is to follow that event: "God shall bless us, and all the ends of the world shall fear him." "Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?"

^a Rom. xv. 8, &c.

PSALM CXVIII.

- 1 CONFESS to Jehovah that he is good,
That his tender love is everlasting.
- 2 Let Israel say—
That his tender love is everlasting.
- 3 Let the house of Aaron say—
That his tender love is everlasting.
- 4 Let them that fear Jehovah say—
That his tender love is everlasting.
- 5 I called upon Jah in distress;
Jah heard me, and released me.
- 6 Jehovah is with me, I fear not
What man can do unto me;
- 7 Jehovah is with me to be my helper,
Therefore shall I look 'in triumph' on my enemies.
- 8 It is better to take shelter in Jehovah,
Than to trust in man;

- 9 It is better to take shelter in Jehovah,
Than to trust in princes.
- 10—11 All nations came about me and surrounded me ;
It was in the name of Jehovah that I destroyed them :^r
- 12 They came about me like a swarm of bees ;
They burnt out like a fire of thorns :
It was in the name of Jehovah that I destroyed them.
- 13 Thou didst thrust sore at me, that I might fall ;
But Jehovah was my helper :
- 14 Jah is my strength and the theme of my song,
And he is become my salvation.
- 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the
righteous.
The right hand of Jehovah hath done mightily !
- 16 The right hand of Jehovah is exalted,
The right hand of Jehovah hath done mightily !
- 17 I shall not die, truly I shall live,^s
And declare the deeds of Jah.
- 18 Jah chastened me sorely,
But he hath not delivered me up unto death.
- 19 Open unto me the gates of righteousness,
That I may enter them, and give thanks unto Jah.
- 20 This is the gate of Jehovah,
The righteous may enter thereat.
- 21 I praise thee, for thou hast answered me,
And art become my salvation.
- 22 The stone which the builders rejected,
Is become the head stone of the corner.

^r Or "could."^s Or, "For I am to live."

23 This is from Jehovah :

It is a wonder in our eyes.

24 This is the day that Jehovah hath made,

Let us rejoice in it and be glad.

25 Save, Jehovah, I beseech thee ;

I beseech thee, O Jehovah ! give prosperity.

26 Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah ;

We bless you from the house of Jehovah.

27 El is Jehovah, he shineth forth upon us :

Bind the sacrifice with cords,

Even to the horns of the altar.

28 Thou art my El, and I will praise thee ;

My Elohim, I will extol thee.

29 Confess ye to Jehovah, that he is good,

That his tender love is everlasting.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm, if it be not a continuation of the former, is evidently on the same subject, the exaltation of the Messiah, who confirms the promises made unto the fathers, and gives the Gentiles cause to glorify God for his mercy. This began to be accomplished, in the highest sense of all, in gathering a kind of first fruits of his creatures, in the events which immediately succeeded the first advent ; but various parts of the Psalm have plainly reference to the more generally important issue of the second coming of Christ. The Psalm is several times quoted in the New Testament.

That the tender love of God is everlasting, Israel, the house of Aaron, and all that fear God, are called upon to acknowledge—to acknowledge, because of the wonderful display of the power of Jehovah in the last days, which the Spirit of prophecy, as usual, anticipates in this sacred song.

The 5th and following verses some have applied to the

Redeemer personally: but, upon the whole, I rather refer it to the Jewish nation; which, at the period supposed, has been the object of such particular mercies. The contrast between trusting in Jehovah and trusting in princes, seems more referable to the concerns of his people, than of Messiah himself personally. The circumstances of the conflict which is described in the 10th and 11th verses, can agree with nothing but “the battle of the great day of Almighty God,” so perpetually the theme of prophecy.

It appears also from parallel prophecies, that on that occasion, a desperate attack is made upon restored Israel, by the combined powers of *Antichrist*. And it is this event that brings on the final catastrophe: and in this conflict the right hand of the Lord is displayed in a miraculous manner, as we have seen on the many occasions when our comment on the Psalms has led us to the same subject.

And in this connexion, perhaps, we arrive at a more literal and important meaning of the expression in the 17th verse, “I shall not die but live,” than has been usually supposed.

This great conflict ushers in the period of the second coming of Christ, or rather of his revelation in flaming fire as the judge and avenger, when not only the saints that slept appear invested in their glorious bodies, and that mystery is realized which the Apostle has unfolded; “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” But besides this congregation of the Lord assembled by the last call of the sacred trumpets, there is among the redeemed on the earth an abolition of death: there are they that shall be written among the living in Jerusalem—“and at that time shall thy people be delivered, every one that is found written in the book.”—Dan. xii. 1. And to this the passage before us seems more immediately to relate.

This leads to the glorious scene of the kingdom. The gates of righteousness may denote the entrance of the various parts of the church into this glorious state. A

similar metaphor is used in the last chapters of the Revelation: "And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there."—"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

The 22d verse cannot be mistaken. "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone that was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner."^t

Such, says St. Peter, will the exalted Jesus prove "to them that are disobedient." But "unto them that believe he is precious," as it is contained in Scripture, "*Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.*"^u And our blessed Lord himself, referring to this passage, adds: "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder."^x Making a distinction, as most commentators suppose, between those enemies that should fall in opposing themselves to the rising interests of the Gospel, and those enemies that should be the particular objects of destruction when the Son of Man shall come.

The 25th verse is none other than the congratulatory Hosannah, which the children were inspired to sing in the temple: a congratulation which all the Jewish nation will adopt, as our Lord has intimated, when they shall see him again at his second coming.

The binding of the Victim with cords, &c. may be emblematical of the sacrifice of praise, which will henceforth proceed to everlasting ages; and the theme—"the tender love of Jehovah is everlasting." But with respect to restored Israel, we learn from the prophets, that animal sacrifices will be again appointed on their holy hill.

^t Acts iv. 10, 11.

^u 1 Epist. ii. 6, 7.

^x Luke xx. 18.

PSALM CXIX.

N

- 1 Most blessed are they whose way is pure,
Who walk in the law of Jehovah.
- 2 Most blessed are they who observe his testimonies,
Who seek him with all their heart ;
- 3 Ay, 'who' have done no ill,
Who have walked in his way.
- 4 Thou hast given thy commandments,
That they should be strictly observed.
- 5 I desire that my ways may be directed
To keep thy statutes :
- 6 Then shall I not be ashamed,
When I have had respect unto all thy commandments.
- 7 I shall confess to thee with sincerity of heart,
When I have learned all thy righteous judgments.
- 8 I will observe thy statutes ;
Thou wilt not forsake me utterly.

O

- 9 How shall a young man keep pure^y his way ?
In taking heed according to thy word.
- 10 I have sought thee with my whole heart,
Suffer me not to err from thy commandments.
- 11 I have treasured thy words in my heart,
That I might not sin against thee.

^y זָכָה "*purus, mundus fuit*"—
"*coram iudice obtinuit* ; h. e. *purus*
apparuit, vicit." *Sm. Lex. Heb.*—

Compare Job xv. 14 ; Micah vi. 11 ;
and Psalm li. 6.

- 12 Blessed be thou, O Jehovah ;
Teach me thy statutes.
- 13 With my lips have I talked
Of all the judgments of thy mouth.
- 14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies,
As in all manner of riches.
- 15 I will meditate in thy precepts,
And contemplate thy ways.
- 16 I will delight myself in thy statutes,
I will not forget thy words.

ג

- 17 Foster* thy servant, that I may live,
And that I may keep thy word.
- 18 Uncover mine eyes, that I may see
Wonderful things out of thy law.
- 19 I am a stranger upon earth ;
Hide not thy commandments from me.
- 20 My heart breaketh for love
Towards thy commandments at all times.
- 21 Thou hast rebuked the proud, accursed,
Who err from thy commandments.
- 22 Remove from me the reproach and contempt 'I bear,'
Because I have kept thy testimonies.
- 23 Ay, princes have sat and spoken against me,
'But' thy servant will meditate on thy statutes.
- 24 Thy testimonies also are my delights,
My counsellors.

* See Simon in גמל

7

- 25 My soul hath cleaved to the dust ;
Quicken me according to thy word.
- 26 I have talked of thy ways, and thou communest with me,
Teach me thy statutes.
- 27 Instruct me in the way of thy precepts,
And let me meditate on thy wonderful works.
- 28 My soul hath melted for sorrow,
Raise me up^a according to thy word.
- 29 Remove far from me the way of lying,
And graciously vouchsafe thy instructions.
- 30 I have chosen the way of truth,
And have placed thy judgments before me ;
- 31 I have clung unto thy testimonies ;
Let me not be disappointed, O Jehovah.
- 32 I will run in the way of thy commandments,
For thou wilt enlarge my heart.

17

- 33 Teach me, O Jehovah, the way of thy statutes,
And I will keep it to the utmost.
- 34 Instruct me, and I will keep thy law ;
Yea, I will observe it with my whole heart.
- 35 Make me to walk in the paths of thy commandments,
For in them is my delight.
- 36 Let my heart be inclined to thy testimonies,
And not unto gain.
- 37 Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity,
Quicken me in thy way.

^a "Make me to stand erect."

38 Establish thy word unto thy servant,
Who is devoted to thy fear.^b

39 Turn away my reproach that I fear,
For thy judgments are good :

40 Lo, I have longed for thy visitations ;
Quicken me in thy righteousness.

1

41 Let thy tender love come unto me, Jehovah,
Thy salvation according to thy word :

42 And I will answer him that revileth me,
That I have trusted in thy word :

43 And take not entirely the word of truth out of my mouth,
For in thy judgments have I hoped :

44 And I will keep thy law continually,
For ever and ever.

45 And I will walk at liberty,^c
For I have sought thy precepts.

46 I will speak of thy testimonies before kings,
And be not ashamed.

47 And I will delight myself in thy commandments,
Which I have loved :

48 And I will lift up my hands to thy commandments,
Which I have loved.

1

49 Remember thy word unto thy servant,
In which thou hast caused me to trust.

50 This is my comfort in my affliction,
That thy word hath quickened me.

^b Or, "which is according to thy fear : " the promised reward.

^c At large, in an ample space.

- 51 The proud have greatly derided me,
‘But’ I declined not from thy law.
- 52 I remembered thy eternal judgments ;
‘I remembered’ Jehovah, and comforted myself.
- 53 A horror hath seized me because of the wicked
That forsake thy law.
- 54 Thy statutes have been my songs
In the house of my pilgrimage.
- 55 I have remembered thy name at night, O Jehovah,
And I have kept thy law.
- 56 This was with me,
That I might observe thy visitations.

□

- 57 My portion is, Jehovah, I have said,
That I might keep thy words ;
- 58 I have waited thy presence with my whole heart,
Be gracious to me according to thy word.
- 59 I thought on my ways,
And turned my feet unto thy testimonies.
- 60 I made haste, and hesitated not,
To keep thy commandments.
- 61 The nets of the wicked surrounded me,
But I forgot not thy law.
- 62 At midnight I would arise to confess to thee,
Concerning thy righteous judgments.
- 63 I was the companion of all them that feared thee,
And that kept thy precepts.
- 64 Thy tender love, O Jehovah, hath filled the earth ;^d
Teach me thy statutes.

^d Or, “The earth is full of thy tender love,
O Jehovah, teach me thy statutes.”



- 65 Kindly hast thou dealt with thy servant,
Jehovah, according to thy word :
- 66 Teach me right judgment and knowledge,
For I have been faithful to thy commandments.
- 67 Before I was afflicted I 'would have' recoiled,
But immediately* I kept thy words.
- 68 Good art thou and beneficent,
Teach me thy statutes.
- 69 The proud have forged a falsehood against me,
But I have kept thy precepts with my whole heart.
- 70 Their understanding is gross like fat,[†]
But I have delighted myself 'in' thy law.
- 71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted,
That I might learn thy statutes.
- 72 The instructions of thy lips are better to me
Than thousands of gold and silver.



- 73 Thy hands have made me and fashioned me ;
Give me understanding, and let me learn thy statutes.
- 74 They that fear thee, shall see me and rejoice,
Because I trust in thy word.
- 75 I knew, O Jehovah, that thou art righteous,
That in thy judgment and in thy truth thou afflictedst me.
- 76 Let, I beseech thee, thy tender love be my consolation,
According to thy word unto thy servant.

* מַעַץ proprie notat *tempus quod præsto est et jamjam instat.*

† "Geddes adopts the rendering of the Septuagint and Vulgate, ' Their

heart is curdled like milk : ' Michaelis renders, ' Their heart is void of sensation, like fat.' " ВООТРОУЮ.

- 77 Let thy compassion be extended to me, that I may live ;
For thy law is my delight.
- 78 Let the proud be put to shame, for they have dealt perversely
with me.^s
'But' I will meditate in thy precepts.
- 79 Let those who fear thee be turned unto me,
And they who have known thy testimonies.
- 80 O let my heart be perfect in thy precepts,
That I may not be ashamed.

D

- 81 My soul hath fainted for thy salvation,
I wait for thy word.
- 82 Mine eyes have been consumed for thy word,
Saying, When wilt thou comfort me ?
- 83 When I have been like a bottle in the smoke,
I have not forgotten thy statutes.
- 84 How many are the days of thy servant ?
When wilt thou execute judgment on my persecutors ?
- 85 The proud have digged pits for me,
For they are not according to thy law.
- 86 In all thy commandments there is faithfulness ;
They persecute me in vain : help me.
- 87 They had almost made an end of me upon earth,
Yet I forsook not thy commandments.
- 88 Quicken me according to thy tender love,
That I may keep the testimonies of thy mouth.

^s " ' They dealt perversely with me '—' they have afflicted me and op- pressed me ;' literally, ' they have bowed me down, or bent me." HORSLEY.

ל

- 89 For ever, O Jehovah, is thy word ;
It is established in the heavens.
- 90 Thy faithfulness is from age to age ;
Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.
- 91 They abide at this day,^h according to thy decree,
For all are thy servants.
- 92 Unless thy law had been my delight,
Then had I perished in my affliction.
- 93 Never will I forget thy precepts,
For by them thou hast quickened me.
- 94 I am thine, save me,
For I have sought thy precepts.
- 95 The wicked waited for me to destroy me :
I considered thy testimonies.
- 96 I have seen the end of all perfection ;
Thy commandment is exceedingly broad.

מ

- 97 How have I loved thy law !
It is my meditation all the day.
- 98 Through thy commandment thou hast made me wiser than
my enemies ;
For it is ever with me.
- 99 Thou hast made me wiser than my teachers,
For thy testimonies are my meditation.
- 100 I have discernment more than the elders,
For I have observed thy precepts.

^h "Rather, 'The day continueth.' For עמדי read, with the LXX. and Houbigant, עמדי," &c. HORSLEY.

- 101 I restrained my feet from every evil path,
That I might keep thy way.
- 102 I have not departed from thy judgments,
For thou hast taught me.
- 103 Sweeter were thy words to my taste
Than honey to my mouth.
- 104 Through thy commandments I get understanding,
Therefore I have hated every false way.

2

- 105 Thy word is a lamp to my feet,
And a light to my paths.
- 106 I have sworn and will confirm it,
To keep thy righteous judgments.
- 107 I am much depressed, O Jehovah ;
Quicken me according to thy word.
- 108 Accept, I beseech thee, Jehovah, the freewill offerings of
my mouth,
And teach me thy judgments.
- 109 My soul is continually in my hand,
Yet I have not forgotten thy law.
- 110 The wicked have laid a snare for me,
But I erred not from thy precepts.
- 111 Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage for ever,
For they are the rejoicing of my heart.
- 112 I have inclined my heart to keep thy statutes
At all times to the utmost.

D

- 113 I have hated vain thoughts,
But thy law have I loved.
- 114 Thou art my hiding-place and my shield,
I have hoped in thy word.

- 115 Depart from me, ye wicked,
For I will keep the commandments of God.
- 116 Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live,
And let me not be ashamed in my hope.
- 117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe,
And I will ever regard thy statutes.
- 118 Thou hast cast down all them that erred from thy statutes,
For their cunning is vain.ⁱ
- 119 Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth as dross,
Therefore I have loved thy testimonies.
- 120 My flesh trembled for fear of thee,^k
And I was afraid of thy judgments.

y

- 121 I have done justice and judgment ;
Do not leave me to mine oppressors.
- 122 Soothe thy servant with good,
Let not the proud oppress me.
- 123 Mine eyes have failed for thy salvation,
And for thy righteous sentence.
- 124 Deal with thy servant according to thy tender love,
And teach me thy statutes.
- 125 I am thy servant ; instruct me,
That I may know thy testimonies.
- 126 It is time for thee to act, O Jehovah :
They have annulled thy law.
- 127 ^lNotwithstanding, I have loved thy commandments
Above gold, aye above fine gold :

ⁱ Horsley.

^k "A thrilling horror curdles my skin." Idem.

^l על כן in the beginning of these

two verses seems antithetical : "they have made void thy law, whereas I, or I on the contrary." HORSLEY.

- 128 Notwithstanding, I have esteemed thy precepts to be altogether
right ;
I have hated every false way.

¶

- 129 Wonderful are thy testimonies,
Notwithstanding, my soul hath observed them.
- 130 The manifestation of thy word giveth life,
Maketh wise the simple.
- 131 I opened my mouth and panted,
For I loved thy commandments.
- 132 Look upon me and be gracious unto me,
As thou art wont to them that love thy name.
- 133 Order my steps in thy word,
And no vanity shall have dominion over me.
- 134 Deliver me from the oppression of man,
That I may keep thy precepts.
- 135 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant,
And teach me thy statutes.
- 136 Rivers of waters ran down mine eyes,
For them who observed not thy laws.

‡

- 137 Righteous art thou, O Jehovah,
And right in thy judgments.
- 138 The testimonies thou hast enjoined are right,
And very faithful.
- 139 My zeal hath consumed me,
Because thy enemies have forgotten thy words.
- 140 Thy word is very pure,
And thy servant loveth it.

- 141 I am little and despised,
But I have not forgotten thy precepts.
- 142 Thy righteousness is eternal justice,
And thy law is the truth.
- 143 Trouble and anguish have seized upon me,
'But' thy commandments are my delight.
- 144 The justice of thy testimonies is everlasting.
Give me understanding, that I may live.

P

- 145 I have called with my whole heart ;
Jehovah, I will keep thy statutes.
- 146 I have called on thee ; save me,
And I will keep thy testimonies.
- 147 I prevented the dawn of the morning and cried,
"I have hoped in thy words."
- 148 Mine eyes prevented the night watches,
To meditate on thy sayings.
- 149 Hear my voice according to thy tenderness ;
Quicken me, O Jehovah, according to thy judgment.
- 150 They that purposed wickedness drew near,
They were far from thy law.
- 151 Thou 'wast' near, O Jehovah ;
For all thy commandments are truth.
- 152 Long since have I known thy testimonies,
That thou hast founded them for ever.

7

- 153 Look upon my affliction and deliver me,
For I have not forgotten thy law.

- 154 Defend my cause and redeem me,
 Quicken me according to thy word.
- 155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
 For they seek not thy statutes.
- 156 Great is thy compassion, O Jehovah ;
 Quicken me according to thy judgment.
- 157 Many are my persecutors and adversaries :
 I have not declined from thy testimonies.
- 158 I beheld the faithless and was grieved,
 Because they observed not thy word.
- 159 See how I love thy precepts, O Jehovah ;
 Quicken me according to thy tenderness.
- 160 Thy word is true from the beginning,
 And all thy righteous judgments are for ever.

W

- 161 Princes persecuted me without a cause,
 But my heart stood in awe of thy words.
- 162 I rejoice over thy word,
 Like one who obtaineth great spoil.
- 163 I have hated and abhorred falsehood,
 But I have loved thy law.
- 164 Seven times a day have I praised thee,
 Because of thy righteous judgments.
- 165 Great peace have they who love thy law :
 There shall be no stumbling-block to them.
- 166 I have hoped for thy salvation, O Jehovah,
 And done according to thy commandment.
- 167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies,
 And I have loved them much.
- 168 I have observed thy precepts and thy testimonies,
 For all thy ways were before me.

n

- 169 Let my cry come unto thee, O Jehovah ;
Give me understanding according to thy word.
- 170 Let my supplication come before thee ;
According to thy word deliver me.
- 171 My lips shall utter praise,
When thou hast taught me thy statutes.
- 172 My tongue shall speak of thy word,
For all thy commandments are righteous.
- 173 Let thy hand be my help,
For I have chosen thy precepts.
- 174 I have longed for thy salvation, O Jehovah,
And thy law is my delight.
- 175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee,
And let thy judgments help me.
- 176 I have wandered like a lost sheep ;^m seek thy servant,
For I have not forgotten thy commandments.

^m "I wander about like a lost sheep." FRENCH AND SKINNER.

FINIS.

EXPOSITION.

If I understand the meaning of the language in many parts of this Psalm, there is an unequivocal assertion in the presence of the heart-searching God, of unsullied purity and perfection, and that not with respect to some particular transaction, or in regard to some unfounded slander of an enemy ; but in the view of the utmost demand of the whole

law, "exceeding broad" as are its "commandments."^a If this be the fact, the claim of David or of any child of man to be the subject of these lines—the Alpha and Omega of this alphabetical Psalm—must be absolutely denied. It must necessarily relate, in its full amount, to the holy breathings of the spotless soul of Jesus Christ. And although we are bound to imitate his example to the utmost, and the universality of our intention of obedience is an excellent criterion of faithfulness; yet we must not lower the meaning of the language of the Psalm, to accommodate it to the actual attainments of any saint upon earth, or to express that joyful boast of the mind, which, on some occasions, an humble Christian may feel on the retrospect of what he has been enabled to do.

Some expressions, however, in the Psalm will seem to militate against this notion of its subject, inasmuch as they intimate errors and imperfections. If such be the case, we must allow that they cannot apply to our blessed Lord; for he was perfect in the full meaning of that term.

But it is upon the assumption, that these passages admit of an interpretation conformable to that general claim to absolute purity and perfection, which is asserted by the suppliant in the Psalm, that I have been led to conclude that suppliant is none other than our great Redeemer, "the HOLY ONE of Israel." Oh may that mind be more and more in us which was in Christ Jesus.

These passages we will examine in order. They will be found in the 67th, the 71st, the 75th, and in the last verse: for myself, I feel no difficulty in reconciling these expressions with the assertion of perfection, and with the character of our Lord. Even in this last verse, I hesitate not to conclude, that the metaphor of the stray sheep is to be understood in a sense a little different from that in which it at first strikes us, perhaps, on account of its common usage.

To begin with the first of these passages, the 67th verse; the difficulty arises only from the misconception of the translators: "Before I was afflicted I went wrong, but now have I kept thy word."

^a See especially verses 20, 44, 55, 58, 60, 69, 101, 102, 112, 121, 129, 168.

If we deduce the meanings of the word שגג from שגה—to wander: even in this case, it is plain from Prov. v. 19,^o that it may apply to that indulgence of the affections which is not sinful. It may relate to that natural desire of ease and of freedom from pain and suffering, in which every human being is naturally inclined to indulge; and to overcome which, requires a considerable effort of the mind, in order to submit voluntarily, to those evils which our duty, or some great achievement, calls us to endure.

We must certainly ascribe to our Lord a mind of this description, inasmuch as he was a real man, “made like unto his brethren in all things, sin only excepted.” Now this consideration will afford a proper clue to the right understanding of the passage. Before I was afflicted, that is, not “before” indefinitely, but at the time when I had yet to suffer—“When I was just going to suffer” (see Parkhurst on טרם), I was indulging myself;” or, “I was implicated in the folds of self-complacency or aversion to pain: or rather (deriving the sense of the term from פסג), “I recoiled, or hesitated; but immediately,” or “forthwith I kept thy word.”

This is clearly illustrated by what is related of our Lord's passion in the garden of Gethsemane. Our divine Surety had a will, it is evident, in its own nature adverse to the suffering which for our sakes he must needs endure: and his heart recoiled from the view of the horrible task. He hesitates, he gives vent to the wishes of his human soul: “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.”—But he immediately submits: “if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will, not mine, be done.”

The 71st verse will admit of a still more easy solution. “It is good for me to have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes,” or, “thy decrees,” “thy appointments,” or “the appointed task which thou hast prescribed to me.” These expressions are not more than equivalent to those of

^o “ שגה *erravit* (proprie ex Arab. شجلا *implicari, implicitum, hærere*) et *titubans vulgo se oblectans.*” SIMON.

^p Quandoquidem rad. שגג, (ut לנן or לין), nec non שגה cognatæ et inter se permixtæ sunt.

the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Hebrews: "For it became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."^a "Though he was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

The 75th verse scarcely need detain us, since we shall all understand that there is a faithfulness in judgment, which induced the righteous God "to afflict and put to grief" the sinner's Surety, no less than to chastise his offending children: nay, it were not so proper to say, Because God is righteous, therefore he afflicts his people; but rather because he is a loving Father, and seeks the moral improvement of his children: but the righteousness of Jehovah is, strictly speaking, that which constituted the necessity of the Saviour's sufferings—judgment and truth required it.

In the last verse I have acknowledged, at first sight, a difficulty: "I have wandered like a lost sheep; seek thy servant, for I have not forgotten thy commandments:" but even here, unless I am much mistaken, the expression, "I have not forgotten thy commandments," means nothing less than, "I have not neglected to observe them."^r The wandering, therefore, in the former part of the verse, cannot refer to a departure from moral perfection in the servant of Jehovah, but must relate merely to the destitute situation of the Redeemer's soul.

The wandering of the lost sheep is, I grant, generally used as a metaphor for moral delinquency, but not always; for in Isaiah, xiii. 14, it evidently is used to describe the destitute state of an unprotected object: "And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up."

In the XXIIIrd Psalm, if the present exposition is just, the relation of trust and dependency which the human soul of our divine Redeemer was to exercise in the paternal Deity, is metaphorically described by that of the sheep with its shepherd; and, though the holy soul of Jesus was not finally, or in general, disappointed in its trust, yet we are

^a Chap. ii. ver. 10.

^r Compare verses 61, 83, 109, 141, and 153.

all aware that there was an hour when it was forsaken of God, and fell destitute in the hand of its pursuers.

It is, therefore, not unagreeable to the analogy of Scripture language, to understand the metaphor of the lost sheep, in the passage before us, in reference to this event, and not to the errors of a peccable creature.

Having, as I imagine, removed the objections that might be urged against the application of this Psalm to Christ, I am sure I may congratulate the enlightened and spiritual Christian on the discovery, if it be a discovery to him, that this remarkable Psalm is indeed descriptive of his Surety's righteousness, and relates to his perfect conformity to the holy law. It contains, indeed, the bright exemplar that the believer is bound to copy all his days; yet it is not the standard whereby we are to ascertain the actual existence of that imitative holiness, the fruit of faith, which we are to follow after, and without which no man shall see the Lord; nor is it to be imagined that the attainments of the children of God can ever warrant in them the glory and boast which the spotless Suppliant in this Psalm offers without hesitation to the heart-searching God.

The reader, perhaps, has set out in his religious walk with this declaration in his lips, which we find in an early part of the Psalm before us, "Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments;" and though, with Paul, as a Pharisee, he could say, "he was, touching the commandment, blameless;" or, with the ruler whom Jesus loved, "All these have I kept from my youth up;" yet he has found, with the above mentioned Apostle, when under the teaching of the Spirit of God, that "the law is spiritual, and that he is carnal"—"and the commandment ordained to life is found to be unto death, working in him all manner of concupiscence," &c. &c. This experience has necessarily overwhelmed him with shame; and so long as he regards this Psalm and other similar Scriptures, as measuring the actual attainments of the accepted saint, and believes that until he has acquired this perfection, he may not rejoice in the privileges of a child of God and of an heir of the promises: while these are his views, he must needs be cast

down by every comment that can be framed on these principles on the CXIXth Psalm—the spirit of bondage must necessarily be engendered: but when it is understood to relate to the holy and spotless purity of Him “who is the end of the law for righteousness to him that believeth;” the Psalm may then be read with comfort and instruction; and the imitation of its holy precepts, as far as ruined man can imitate, may be much more successfully attempted.

If an additional proof be required that this Psalm relates directly and exclusively to Christ, I refer the reader to the XLth Psalm—that unquestionably belongs to Christ.^s Now we may justly call the 4th and four following verses of that Psalm an epitome of this CXIXth: and if the former is known to belong to Christ, it is a sufficient reason to refer the other to him also: “Blessed is the man that,” &c.

I conclude, therefore, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega of this alphabetical Psalm; and will repeat, that I have some suspicion the title of “ALPHA AND OMEGA” was given in the New Testament to our divine Surety, not without reference to these ancient delinquencies of his righteous character, in the Psalms, artificially composed to answer the order of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

^s See Heb. x. comp. Psalm i.

PSALM CXX.¹

FIRST SONG OF DEGREES.

I UNTO Jehovah in my distress I called;
And he answered me:

¹ This and the fourteen following Psalms are entitled, each of them שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלֹת *A Song of Degrees*, or “of the Ascents or Steps.” Neither Jewish nor Christian commentators are agreed as to the meaning of the term: some have supposed these Psalms to have been sung by the

pilgrims ascending up to Jerusalem; others, that they were sung by the worshippers as they ascended in procession the steps leading to the temple: others again suppose that the title refers to some peculiarity in the verse or music.

- 2 Jehovah, deliver my soul from the lips of falsehood,
From the tongue of deceit.
- 3 What shall be done to thee, and what shall be added to thee,
Thou tongue of deceit?
- 4 The sharpened arrows of a mighty one
With glowing embers of genista.*
- 5 Woe is me, that my pilgrimage is prolonged,
I dwell in my tent mourning,†
- 6 Long has my soul had her dwelling
With him that hateth peace.
- 7 I am for peace; but when I speak,
They are for war.

* "According to Geierus, the Spanish Genista, or Rethama, *lignis aliis vehementius scintillet, ardeat et strideat*, sparkles, burns, and crackles more vehemently than other wood." PARK-HURST.

† I have followed Bishop Horsley's translation of these two lines: the

former of them is so translated in the LXX. and Vulg. The inscription of the Syriac to the CXXIst Psalm is "One of the Songs of Ascent out of Babylon."—"I much doubt whether the CXXth Psalm ought to have a place in this set." BISHOP HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

The suppliant in this Psalm is the church, or rather the great Advocate bewailing the situation of the members of his mystical body on earth, with special reference, I think, certainly at the fifth verse, to the awakened Israel of the last days. He speaks of a season of distress brought upon the church, as it should seem by the artifices of some subtle and notorious *liar*. This, the reader will recollect, bears a strong resemblance to the subject of the LIIId Psalm; and I make no doubt we are to refer this Psalm also to that great adversary of the latter days, designated in prophecy, as "having a mouth speaking great things," who was "to make war with the saints and prevail against them;"‡ "the

‡ Daniel vii.

man of sin,"—"that wicked" whose reign the Apostle describes as "the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved: and for this cause God shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."^z

The effect produced by these "false teachers," St. Peter thus describes: "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."^a

The destruction of the liar and deceiver, as described in the 4th verse, is so like the overthrow of the last Antichristian confederacy, that it strongly corroborates the truth of our exposition. "The sharpened arrows of a MIGHTY ONE with glowing embers of genista."—"The Lord Jesus," as we have often seen, in order to finish the controversy of Zion, "is to be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Of the wicked one, it is said, "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming." "And the beast was taken and the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he had deceived them that had the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."

The church complains of a prolonging of her sojourning in a strange country, in a state of mourning, among those that are enemies to peace. What the Spirit of prophecy means by this, the event will fully discover, with its particular bearing upon the remnant of Israel about to be ingrafted again into their own olive tree; but from a comparison of other prophecies, and from what has begun to

^z 2 Thessalonians ii.

^a 2 Peter ii.

come to pass, may we not venture a conjecture, that, when this evil of the false tongue shall be somewhat abated, and "they shall begin to take away his dominion, and to consume it unto the end;" that ere this end arrive there will be an interval of waiting, lengthened beyond expectation, so that some shall begin to say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" And again, that the great calamity of those days shall be destructive wars, which we all know corresponds with other descriptions of the times immediately preceding the long-expected deliverance. A former Psalm has designated the last adversaries as "the people that delight in war." "Wars and rumours of wars" are among our Saviour's signs of his second coming. And Daniel had described it as a time of trouble "such as never was since there was a nation;"^b and I am of opinion that this first song of degrees, respects particularly the situation of the restored colony at Jerusalem; compare "The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly, &c. Isaiah, xxxiii. 7.

^b "The *Targum* is, 'My soul hath long dwelt with *Edom*, hating peace; that is, with the *Romans* or Christians who are intended; for the Jews understand this Psalm of their present captivity."—Dr. GILL.

PSALM CXXI.

SECOND SONG OF DEGREES.

1 I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
Whence cometh my help.^c

2 My help is from Jehovah, the Maker
Of heaven and earth.

3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved,
Thy keeper slumbereth not.

^c Perhaps, "Shall I raise —? From whence —?"

- 4 Behold, he neither slumbereth nor sleepeth
Who keepeth Israel.
- 5 Jehovah will be thy keeper, Jehovah will be thy shade
On thy right hand.
- 6 The sun shall not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night.
- 7 Jehovah will keep thee from all evil,
He will keep thy soul.
- 8 Jehovah will keep thee in thy going out and thy coming in,
From henceforth for ever.

EXPOSITION.

Eben Ezra supposes this Psalm may belong to the children of the captivity, the Jews in their present dispersion. I conceive this is the right clue to the interpretation of these "Songs of Degrees," or, as the Syriac version calls them, "Songs of Ascent out of Babylon." The Babylon is the mystic Babylon, and the Israel of the Psalm, the Israel of the latter days, whose restoration is the harbinger of Messiah appearing, and of the universal deliverance of every branch of his redeemed people.

The first two verses are the prayer of the returning captives; their faces are directed towards Jerusalem for the promised help; for it is there that God has commanded his blessing—"the Redeemer is to come out of Zion:" and thither, at the appointed time, his dispersed must repair to meet him, or to wait his arrival with his saints.

A miraculous Providence superintends the march of the restored Israelites, at least of the several parties lastly restored: such has been the intimation given in several of the foregoing Psalms; and this is clearly the purport of the gracious promises which fill up the remainder of the Psalm before us.

PSALM CXXII.^d

- 1 I HAVE rejoiced with them^e that said to me,
 "We are going to the house of Jehovah."
- 2 Our feet have been stationed
 At thy gates, O Jerusalem.
- 3 Jerusalem is built as a city,
 To which is the general concourse :^f
- 4 Whither the tribes have gone up,
 The tribes of Jah ;
 The congregations of Israel to praise
 The name of Jehovah.
- 5 For there are set the seats of judgment,
 The seats of the house of David.
- 6 Pray ye for the welfare of Jerusalem ;
 May they prosper that love thee !
- 7 May there be peace within thy bulwarks,
 Prosperity in thy palaces !
- 8 Because of my brethren and my companions I will say,
 "Peace be now to thee !"
- 9 Because of the house of Jehovah our Elohim,
 I will seek thy good.

^d This Psalm bears the name of David : some of the Jewish writers, however, refer it to the captivity.

^e So Archbishop Secker.

^f חִבְרָה אֲשֶׁר לָהּ *unto which* : (is) the *association or consociation or collecting together* ;—יְחֻדָּה "omne in universum," one and all.

EXPOSITION.

A correct and literal rendering of the opening of this Psalm seems to present us with some persons who had been stationed at the gates of Jerusalem, and who rejoice to see the concourse of the returning tribes, and to hear them declare the purport of their journey—to go to the house of the Lord. Who are these keepers of the gate to restored Israel? Angels of Jehovah's providence, no doubt; symbolical, perhaps, of those nations that shall be instrumental in the work of the restoration, and shall be waiting for the general deliverance and manifestation of the sons of God, in immediate connexion with Israel's mercies.

"The Jews," says Dr. Gill, "often speak, and some of their commentators on this passage, of a Jerusalem above and below; and of the one being made like the other: so the Targum, 'Jerusalem is built in the firmament as a city, as Jerusalem on earth.'" Of the general truth of this, that there is a "heavenly city"—"a Jerusalem above," the Holy Ghost has informed us, by his Apostle Paul, and he has also taught us to expect, in the vision of the Revelation, that this Jerusalem is "to come down out of heaven from God," to be the heavenly metropolis, as it should seem, of the kingdom of Christ.

In what manner this new Jerusalem is brought into connection with, and absorbs in glory the old Jerusalem, which is to be restored in the last days, is one of those mysteries, as we have often observed, that the fulfilment of prophecy must fully unravel. So far, however, seems clear, that "the Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage with her children," is to be first restored for a short period; and that amidst the struggle for her establishment, and the wars that are waged by the nations of the earth against her independency, the final catastrophe in the awful history of mankind unfolds itself: the warlike powers of ANTICHRIST are "gathered together to the battle of the great day of Almighty God:" and there the MIGHTY CONQUEROR is

manifested; and he "visits the hosts of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth on the earth."

Hence we perceive the great interest that all who love the appearing of Jesus Christ, must take in the restoration of the Jews. How should we watch the rise of events that may lead to that result! and should we be called to that distinguished employment, how high an honour should we esteem it, to promote those measures that may, however remotely, be conducive to any melioration of the condition of the Jewish people! for their Redeemer and Avenger is mighty.

The Psalm before us expresses, I conceive, the sentiments of the children of God in that age, who shall witness the tribes of Jehovah gathering from their dispersion, and shall witness that Jerusalem built, where, ere long, the Lord is to appear in his glory.

Perhaps the mysterious expressions in Zechariah^g may refer to such a time: or at least when the deliverance has been fully accomplished, and the cloud of glory has received the "firstborn that are written in heaven." "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, It shall come to pass, that there shall come many people, and the inhabitants of many cities: and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts: I will go also: yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

And it may be, the blessing of Abraham may then discover itself on a more extensive scale: "I will bless him that blesseth thee, and I will curse him that curseth thee," and in thee, even in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

^g Chap. viii. ver. 20.

PSALM CXXIII.^b

FOURTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 UNTO thee have I lifted up mine eyes,
O thou that dwellest in the heavens.
- 2 Lo, as the eyes of servants are fixed
Upon the hands of their masters ;

And as the eyes of the maid are fixed
Upon the hands of her mistress ;

So are our eyes fixed upon Jehovah our Elohim,
Until he be gracious unto us.
- 3 Be gracious unto us, O Jehovah ; be gracious unto us ;
For we are filled with contempt :
- 4 Our soul is filled with the scorn of them that are at ease,
And with the contempt of the proud.ⁱ

^b This Psalm is also, in our copies, ascribed to David.

securitas, it fastus, qui ex summa securitate oritur, et insolentia." SIMON.

ⁱ שִׁנְיָן "*summa tranquillitas sive*

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm represents the people of God, as anxiously waiting for deliverance, and as looking to the hand of God alone for the fulfilment of that promise which has been so long expected. A comparison borrowed from the attentive manner in which the eastern slaves watch the motion of their master or mistress's hand, is made to depicture the state of suspense and watchful anxiety in which, at the predicted period, the church will be waiting the indications of her Lord's will.

This period is also characterized as one, in which the people of God are particularly exposed to the scorn and contempt of a proud and luxuriant age. These circum-

stances plainly mark out the period particularly in the view of the prophetic Spirit. For though the state of the church and the situation of the individual Christian, have often called, and do still call, for the language of this Psalm, and the tried and experienced Christian understands the metaphor full well; yet, we know from prophecy, that it will correspond, in a more remarkable manner, with the state of things, previous to our Lord's second coming: "There shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" "In the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy; without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of them that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."

In such times, and amid such characters, the children of God, whether of circumcision or of the uncircumcision—and I think there is here also a particular reference to a restored people waiting in Jerusalem,—remembering "what manner of persons they ought to be in all holy conversation, and godliness," are to be "looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God."

PSALM CXXIV.^k

FIFTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 EXCEPT for Jehovah who was for us,
Let Israel now say,
- 2 Except for Jehovah who was for us,
When man rose up against us;

^k This Psalm is in our copies ascribed to David.

- 3 Then had they swallowed us alive,
In the heat of their displeasure against us :
- 4 Then had the waters overwhelmed us,
The torrent had passed over our soul :
- 5 Then had they passed over our soul,
These proud swelling waters.
- 6 Blessed be Jehovah, who hath not given us up
A prey unto their teeth.
- 7 Our soul hath escaped like a bird
From the snare of the fowler :
- The snare was broken,
And we have escaped.
- 8 Our help is in the name of Jehovah,
Who made the heavens and the earth.

EXPOSITION.

The restored Jews, in particular, and the waiting people of God in general, are required in this Psalm to ascribe their deliverance, and very narrow escape, to the immediate interference of Jehovah. A mighty inundation of water sweeping all before it, has frequently, in the former Psalms, represented the inroad of the last enemy. This, no doubt, is the event in the view of the Spirit, the burden of every song of the mysterious harp of prophecy.

The war between "the woman and her seed, and the serpent and his seed," with more or less violence, rages throughout all ages: but now it arrives at a crisis, which must finish the contest for ever. How low the state of the church, the restored Jerusalem more especially, will then be reduced, as far as respects human aid, is very plain, from the several predictions which relate to this great and important era. Mark especially Zechariah, xiv. 1, &c.: "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all

nations against Jerusalem to battle : and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled," "and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle."

PSALM CXXV.

SIXTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 THEY that trust in Jehovah are as a mountain :
As Zion which is not moved, as Jerusalem which abideth for ever.
- 2 The mountains 'were' round about her ;¹
Jehovah 'shall be' round about his people,
From henceforth, even for ever.
- 3 Truly the rod of the wicked one shall not rest
Upon the lot of the righteous ;

So that the righteous shall no more put forth
Their hands unto iniquity.
- 4 Bless with prosperity, O Jehovah, them that are good,^m
And them that are upright in their hearts :
- 5 But those who turn aside to their crooked ways,
Let Jehovah lead them forth with the workers of vanity.

Peace be upon Israel.

¹ "She fell notwithstanding." Compare Coc. in Pool.

^m "Continue in his goodness." Rom. xi. 22.

EXPOSITION.

There is considerable obscurity in the language of this Psalm: enough, however, of its meaning may be discovered to show that it touches upon the same subject as the series in general. Those that wait for the Lord in those trying times, when the awful crisis draws nigh, are encouraged to trust in Jehovah, and are assured of the stability of that city which it seems is the object of the enemies' attack. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."^a

The deliverance in the view of the Psalmist is evidently the final deliverance, for the rod of the wicked one is no more to rest upon the lot of the people of God. Compare Zech. xii. etc. and Is. liv. etc.

Moreover, we discover in the two last verses that a scrutiny and division takes place in the Israel according to the flesh: some who turned aside to their crooked ways are separated for judgment; but those who are distinguished as the real children of God, are blessed with unbounded prosperity. This we shall recollect is the universal description of the consequence of the day of the Lord, both to Israel and to the remnants of the nations.

And even of the professed Christian Church we read, he will gather out of his kingdom all that offend and do iniquity: the angels shall bind them as tares to burn them. Then shall the righteous shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

^a Isaiah xxxiii. 20.

PSALM CXXVI.

SEVENTH SONG OF DEGREES.

1 WHEN Jehovah restored the captivity of Zion,
We were like unto men that dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with a shout of joy.

Then was it said among the nations, "Jehovah is magnified
In what he hath done for these."

3 Jehovah is magnified in what he hath done for us;
We have exulted in gladness.

4 Jehovah hath restored^o our captivity
Like the streams of the south.^p

5 Those who sowed with tears
Shall reap with joy.

6 He who walked along and wept,
Sowing his seed,^q

Shall surely come in with rejoicing,
Bearing his sheaves.

^o Reading with the Syriac version.

^p Or, "the torrents periodically filled." Perhaps from the winds melting the snow on certain mountains.

^q מִשָּׁחַ is wanting in the versions and in some MSS. מִשָּׁחַ expresses the action of casting the seed into the ground.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm evidently anticipates the restoration of the captives of Zion: but both the magnitude of the deliverance celebrated, and what we have found to be the general subject of the Psalms, forbids us to interpret it of the return from the Babylonian captivity. If that were the occasion of its composition, which however is altogether un-

certain, we must, with the Syriac translator, say, it is "an expectation of good things to come."

The subject of thanksgiving is a sudden and unexpected restoration, which seems like a dream to the happy objects of the mercy, which they can hardly credit for joy, which they can hardly think to be real, so much it exceeds their fondest hopes. This deliverance is so great and wonderful, that it serves to set forth the glory of the God of Israel in the heathen world.

The extraordinary change in the situation of Israel is illustrated by two metaphors—the swelling of the mountain torrent, which had been dried up by the heat, at the periodical return of the rainy season; and the loaded sheaves which the rejoicing reaper brings home in harvest, in return for that small quantity of seed that he had committed to the fruitful earth, which he had sown in circumstances of grief, ill sparing, perhaps, the seed-corn, or, from the state of the country or the seasons, little expecting to obtain any return.

How hopeless was Zion's case, when she saw the fountain of Jacob exhausted and dried up, running no more on his desolated country! when she saw her people dispersed and scattered among the heathen, how forlorn is still her hope! But there is a promise—"For, lo! I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve; yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth."^r

We have represented, also, in other Scriptures, the happy astonishment of Zion at the sight of her numerous progeny, which all on a sudden are presented to her view: "Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together and come to thee."—"Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone! these, where had they been?"^s Again, who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children."^t

^r Amos ix. 9.

^s Isaiah xlix. 18, &c.

^t Isaiah lxvi. 8.

PSALM CXXVII."

EIGHTH SONG OF DEGREES.

1 IF Jehovah will not build the house,
The builders have been labouring in vain.

If Jehovah keep not the city,
The keeper is watching in vain.

2 In vain 'is it' you rise up early,
Deferring long your rest.

Ye are eating the hard-earned bread:
While truly he giveth his beloved sleep.¹

3 Behold, children are an inheritance from Jehovah,
A gift 'is' the fruit of the womb.

4 As arrows in the hand of the warrior,
So are the children of youth.²

5 Happy the warrior that hath filled
His quiver with these.

They shall not be confounded when they speak
With their enemies in the gate.³

¹ The inscription of the Psalm in the Hebrew is, of or for Solomon.

² For יְלָדָיו the Septuagint are thought to have read יְלָדָיו

³ Or, "the youthful children."

⁴ Or, "When they denounce the enemies at the gate."

EXPOSITION.

The literal meaning of this Psalm is obvious. Vain are the efforts of man to raise a family, to defend that family or supply it with food, without the blessing of the Lord. Distress and sorrow are the only fruits of the unblessed efforts of human industry: but great is the peace of those

on whom the Lord bestows his favour. The Psalm ends with a beautiful description of the man whom the Lord has blessed with a numerous posterity, in the midst of whom he stands to face his enemy, in the assembly of his citizens or chiefs of his people, or when he beats back the armed foe.

How far this picture of earthly felicity is intended to be applied literally to the redeemed children of God, in their earthly pilgrimage, may admit of many doubts. He sometimes indulges his people with temporal prosperity, he sometimes withholds it; and they eat the bread of sorrow "while the world rejoices:" they sometimes go destitute, are childless, or bereaved of their children; while the enemies of the Lord prosper in the world, "have children at their desire, and leave their babes in affluence." This must be acknowledged. But then the people of God "know in themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." They know, that their sorrows "shall be turned into joy"—"joy never to be taken from them." If they go childless, where they could desire this gift of Jehovah; he hath promised to "give them in his house, and within his walls, a place and a name, better than of sons and daughters—an everlasting name that shall not be cut off."

All this, however, forbids that we should give a private interpretation to this Psalm: and even the Jewish writer Kimchi thought, that by the name of Solomon, in the inscription of the Psalm, the MESSIAH was intended; and I think we are held by the analogy of the meaning of the other Psalms, to refer this to that numerous progeny, which shall be born, or shall appear to have been born, to the Messiah, and to the Church, in the last days; when, to use the metaphor of the last Psalm, they shall be as the loaded sheaves of the harvest-man, or, as was expressed in another Psalm, shall be, as the numerous drops of the morning dew, upon the holy hills. "Behold I and the children which God has given me," is a language which the Apostle attributes to our blessed Redeemer.^a

^a Augustin beautifully applies the language of this Psalm to Christian ministers and pastors, as God's builders and watchmen of his Church. How vain their labours without the grace and power of God!

PSALM CXXVIII.

THE NINTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 BLESSED is every one that hath feared Jehovah,
That hath walked in his ways.
- 2 Thou shalt eat^b the labour of thine hands ;
Blessed art thou, ay, it shall be well with thee.
- 3 Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine
In the apartments of thine house ;

Thy children like olive-plants
Round about thy table.
- 4 Behold, for thus blessed the man shall be
That hath feared Jehovah.
- 5 Jehovah shall bless thee from Zion :

And thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity
All the days of thy life.
- 6 And thou shalt see thy children's children,
' And ' peace upon Israel.

^b יֵצֵא is omitted in the versions.

EXPOSITION.

Contrary to all preconceived opinions, I am led also by the meaning of the former Psalms, and the analogy of Scripture metaphors, to apply this Psalm also to Christ and his church ; in special reference to the glorious scenes of the last days, when "the bride the Lamb's wife shall have made herself ready." For, soon after the restoration, will

Zion assume this character, and "the glory of the Lord will appear in her."

This relationship of Christ to his church is pointed out in many passages of Scripture. The Psalm, indeed, before us, represents the possession of a fruitful wife and flourishing progeny, as the good man's reward. This, as we have argued on the former Psalm, can be only spiritually true of Jesus Christ. And thus understood it is agreeable to the representation of the Apostle: "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, &c."

Again: with respect to the latter part of the Psalm, there could be no promise to the obedient child of God, that, as a reward for his religious fear, he should see Jerusalem in prosperity all his life long, and peace upon Israel, The verbs indeed may be translated in the optative mood; but still I think in these oracular Scriptures the blessing thus pronounced would imply something more than the mere benevolent wish; and therefore the promise could be only intended for the MESSIAH in the character of the BRIDEGROOM of his church.

This picture of her prosperity represents, I conceive, those scenes of felicity, that shall ensue at the second advent. For, according to the style of the Scripture metaphor, it is not till that era that the marriage of Christ and his church is consummated, nor in the analogous state of the restored Jerusalem below does Zion exchange the name 'Forsaken' for the symbolical appellation Hephzibah, and the land previously termed 'Desolate' pronounced to be Beulah.^c

We may further remark, that the last verse of this Psalm, which at first sight might seem least of all to relate to Christ, and his spouse the church, is exactly similar to the close of the XLVth Psalm, where the meaning cannot be doubted: "Instead of thy fathers, thou shalt have children, whom thou mayest make princes in all lands."

^c Isaiah lxii.

PSALM CXXIX.

TENTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 MANY have been mine adversaries from my youth,
Let Israel now say :
- 2 Many have been mine adversaries from my youth,
But they prevailed not against me.
- 3 The ploughers ploughed upon my back,
They lengthened out their furrows.^d
- 4 The righteous Jehovah hath cut asunder
The cords of the wicked.
- 5 They were confounded and turned back,
All who hated Zion.
- 6 They were as the corn^e of the house-tops,
That withereth before it is plucked up :
- 7 Whereof the reaper filleth not his hands,
Nor he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom.
- 8 Neither do they that pass by the way, say,
“ The blessing of Jehovah be upon you :”
“ We bless you in the name of Jehovah.”

^d Or, with the Syriac, “prolonged
their humiliation or depression.”

^e קציר evidently includes corn
as well as grass.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm also evidently concerns the Israelitish nation in the day of its final deliverance and triumph. Israel is made to recount, how, from the earliest period of their history, called figuratively Israel's youth, they had had to

contend with many adversaries, yet, through the providence of their divine Protector, these adversaries had not prevailed. We need but mention the names of the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Grecians of Antioch, and the Romans, to illustrate this complaint. And the Israel of God, the seed gathered from among the Gentile nations, in these times of Israel's unbelief, have fully stood in the place of the ancient church, and have "fallen by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days;" and look, as a body, for their final deliverance, only to that period, when the Lord shall have remembered Zion, and his glory shall have appeared upon her.

"The ploughers ploughed upon my back," is supposed by some to be a figure of general depression, taken from the severe scourging of the object of punishment, while he is fastened to the stake, to which the "cutting asunder of the cord," in the next verse, refers. Others take it more literally, as a complaint of Zion respecting the desolation of her country, during her last captivity under the Romans; when that prediction recorded in the prophet Micah^f was fulfilled, "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed like a field: and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house, as the high places of the forest."

But the Psalm anticipates the time of the final and miraculous overthrow of the last enemies of Zion, and of the kingdom of God. This destruction, as usual, is represented as sudden, terrible, and complete. The close of the Psalm contemplates these hostile powers as yet flourishing indeed, but compares them to the blade of corn that germinates by accident, during the rainy season, upon the flat roofs of the eastern houses. It cannot come to maturity: it promises no harvest: the pious passenger asks not the blessing of Providence upon it; or, it affords no opportunity for the wonted mutual congratulations of the time of harvest.

What a striking metaphor of the vain attempts of kings and nations against the Lord, and against his Christ! Should we live to see the last combination formed, and to

^f Chap. iii. 12.

witness the incipient prosperity of the enemies of God and of his people, then let us remember that the "corn on the house-tops withered before it is grown up," is the emblem of their greatness; especially will it be seen in relation to a combination of the nations against the restored Jerusalem.

PSALM CXXX.

ELEVENTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 OUT of the deeps have I called upon thee, Jehovah:
O Lord, hear my voice.
- 2 Let thine ears be attentive
To the voice of my prayer.
- 3 If thou retainest^a iniquity, O Jah,
Lord, who can stand?
- 4 Truly with thee is forgiveness,^b
That thou mayest be feared.ⁱ
- 5 I have waited for Jehovah, my soul hath waited,
And in his word have I hoped.
- 6 My soul hath waited for the Lord as the night-watch for the
morning,
—The night-watch for the morning.^h
- 7 Let Israel hope in Jehovah,
For with Jehovah is the tender love.
- 8 Aye, with him the plenteous redemption,
And it is he that will redeem Israel
From all his iniquities.

^a "Watch for," or "remember."

^b "A propitiation." LXX. and Vulg.
The means of reconciliation that thou
mayest be revered. The plenteous
redemption of the 8th verse. Comp.
Zech. xiii. 1.

ⁱ Perhaps, "Therefore shalt thou
be revered."

^h "My soul is with the Lord from
the morning watch—from the morn-
ing watch until night." HOSSELY
after the LXX.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm consists of two parts: the complaint of Israel in circumstances of deep distress, and the answer of the divine Oracle promising final and complete deliverance. From this description of the deliverance we may argue, that the deep distress which is in the view of the Spirit, is, as in the other Psalms, that which arises from the difficulties of their situation in the last days. It will be the character of that deliverance, as we have seen before, that it shall seem to tarry beyond the expected time, so that "some men" shall begin to think, "the Lord is slack concerning his promise."

In this situation his people who love and long for his appearing, are compared to the soldiers or watchmen, who, stationed on their guard by night, are marking with great anxiety the first appearances of the break of day, which is to relieve them from their tedious employment: and, no doubt, many circumstances in the Christian warfare will partake of the same character as this last crisis, and will call for the same language from churches and from individuals. Compare Isaiah: "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night."

 PSALM CXXXI.¹

TWELFTH SONG OF DEGREES.

I O JEHOVAH, my heart was not elated,
 Neither were mine eyes lifted up;
 Neither have I meddled with great things,
 And things too wonderful for me:

¹ This Psalm is ascribed to David.

2 But I have composed and stilled my soul,^m
 As a child weaned from its mother ;ⁿ
 My soul 'is' as a weaned child."

3 Let Israel trust in Jehovah,
 For henceforth, even for ever.

^m Or, "If I have not treated and stilled my soul!" &c.

ⁿ Or, "As a weaned child after its mother."

^o Or, "A weaned child after me is my soul," i. e. hushed and stilled, denied in its fondest desires.

EXPOSITION.

This short Psalm, like the last, consists of two parts: the supplication of Israel, and the answer of the divine Oracle. The supplication being a prayer prepared for Israel by the Holy Ghost, is prophetic of what shall be the temper of the nation at the season anticipated. And we may remark, that it exhibits a state of mind, the very reverse of that which was found in these children of the patriarchs in the times of Christ and his Apostles.

Their hearts were then lifted up with pride; and the proud looks of the Pharisee showed, that he "trusted in himself that he was righteous, and despised others." The Apostle also represents the Jews as much disposed to indulge in their carnal reasonings, in matters too high for the human understanding. Hence his expostulation: "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me *thus*? Hath not the potter power over the clay to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

But how different is the state of mind exhibited in this prophetic prayer! Israel is now become "like a little child." We cannot doubt that this is the period which the ancient oracles had in view: "If, then, their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept the punishment of their iniquity: then will I remember my covenant with Abraham, and my covenant with Isaac, and my covenant with Jacob; and I will remember the land."^p We cannot fail to see a

^p Leviticus xxvi. 41, 42.

just application of this metaphor to him who spiritually enters now into the Gospel Covenant: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and the heart of the penitent in his self-renunciations will often require to be treated as a child weaned from its mother, which must be denied its fondest wishes.

PSALM CXXXII.

THIRTEENTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 JEHOVAH remember David,^a
And all his trouble :^c
- 2 How he sware unto Jehovah,
And vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob :
- 3 "I will not enter the tent of my house,
I will not go up into my bed,
- 4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes,
Nor slumber to mine eyelids,
- 5 Until I find the place of Jehovah,
The habitation of the Mighty One of Jacob."^a

^a Or, "Jehovah be memorialized respecting David."

^c עֲנֵהוּ The LXX. render *πρὸς αὐτοῦ*, with which agree the other versions; but we may understand it in the sense of "*an answer*," or "*declaration*." Rather, "earnestness," or "deep concern."

^b Archbishop Secker's observations have been thought to throw considerable light on this passage: "מָקוֹם לַיהוָה Mudge seems to translate rightly *the place of the Lord*, &c.; for, as there was no inquiry made at the ark in the days of Saul (1 Chron. xiii. 3), many might not know whereabouts, and few exactly where, it was.

Besides, finding doth not always imply an uncertainty in the search."—"Now, David did go to fetch the ark, and might not be a day in his journey to it. But how could he resolve to find in a day's time, where God would have it fixed for a continuance? It no where appears that he ever thought of finding it: rather, God fixed it for him, or, more properly speaking, for Solomon. See here ver. 13. Further still, the Psalm expresses in the next verses, first his hearing news of the ark, then his actually finding it. כָּרִית יַעֲרִים i. e. at כָּרִית יַעֲרִים 1 Chron. xiii. 5, 6, which was the completion of his vow. Houbigant

- 6 "Lo, we have heard of it at Ephratah,^t
We have found it in the fields of Jaer.
- 7 Let us go into his habitation,
And fall prostrate at his footstool."
- 8 "Arise, O Jehovah, 'to go' to thy resting-place,"
Thou and the ark of thy glory.
- 9 Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness,
And thy well-beloved^x shout for joy."
- 10 For the sake of David thy servant,
Turn not away the face of thine Anointed.
- 11 Jehovah swarc unto David,
He will not turn from his truth.
- "On the fruit of thy body
I will settle thy throne.
- 12 If thy children will observe my covenant
And my statutes which I shall teach them,
- Their children also for ever
Shall sit on thy throne."
- 13 Truly Jehovah hath chosen Zion,
He hath fixed on it his habitation :
- 14 This is the place of my rest for ever,
Here will I dwell, for I have chosen it :
- 15 I will abundantly bless her provision,
I will satisfy her poor with bread ;

represents the sense to be, God and the symbol of his presence, the ark, had in former times been sometimes in Shiloh and sometimes at Kiriath Jeirim, and the people went sometimes to the one place and sometimes to the other to worship God ; but now God is solicited to fix his habitation in Zion."

^t "The ark and sanctuary."

^u Something like this appears, from Numb. x. 35, was the appointed form of prayer at the removal of the ark ; and we find the whole of this address used by Solomon at the dedication of the temple.

^x "The objects of thy loving-kindness."

- 16 And I will clothe her priests with salvation,
And her well-beloved shall shout for joy.
- 17 Here will I cause the horn of David to grow up,
I will trim the lamp of my Anointed.
- 18 His enemies I will clothe with shame,
But upon him his crown shall flourish.

EXPOSITION.

The beginning of this Psalm, as will be seen by the notes, refers to the zeal of David in seeking the ark of the covenant, and preparing a tent for its reception on Mount Zion, no doubt in obedience to a revelation he had received. The Psalm is evidently spoken in the character of the king of Israel, the anointed of the Lord. His covenant with David is pleaded, respecting the succession of his children.

There is something ambiguous in this covenant. According to the Psalm, it rested on the condition of the obedience of the seed of David to the laws of the God of Israel. Yet, notwithstanding, the issue of the covenant of David was considered as certain; his "mercies" were "sure," and "his throne was to be established for ever." Hence it is evident, that the ultimate object of the covenant respecting the seed of David, was not his children generally; but that mysterious "child," that was to be "born to the house of David," to be both "David's son" and "David's Lord." Now, the covenant of grace and the covenant of works meet in the anointed Saviour. It was a covenant of grace unto his people; but to himself a covenant of works. For his proper merits was he to be anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and to establish the throne of David in righteousness for ever.

To this effect the Prophet Isaiah sings: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of

David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever—the zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this.” Compare the declaration of the angel when the birth of JESUS was announced: “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God will give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.”

PSALM CXXXIII.^y

FOURTEENTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 BEHOLD how fair, ay, how delightful
The rest^z of brethren together!^a
 - 2 As that sweet ointment on the head
That ran down upon the beard—the beard of Aaron,
That ran down on the surface of his garments;
 - 3 So shall be the dew of Hermon that shall descend^b
Upon the mountains of Zion;
- For there Jehovah hath commanded the blessing,
Life even for ever.

^y This Psalm is ascribed to David.

^z “The sabbath.”

^a “All as one.” “How good is the sabbatism of brethren, even gathered together, for the exercise of re-

ligion.” GUSSETIUS.

^b The dew of Hermon means, I conceive, a most plentiful dew; such as was wont to fall on those mountains.

EXPOSITION.

I cannot acquiesce in the general opinion that this Psalm is designed to celebrate the felicity of brotherly love. I believe it to be an eulogium upon Mount Zion, the general resort and holy resting-place of the tribes of Israel, when

they journeyed from all parts of the country to keep the solemn feasts of the Lord.

The imagery of the Psalm is taken from the particular situation of the country. Hermon distinguishes a very lofty range of mountains, situated towards the sources of the Jordan, and which penetrating the higher regions of the air, condenses the vapours of the atmosphere, and distils them in copious falls of dew upon the lower eminences, as copious a dew shall fall upon the hills of Zion and Jerusalem. This fall of dew is compared to the holy consecrating oil, which poured on the head of Aaron and his successors the high priests, ran down to their beards, and diffused its rich perfume over their robes. This, no doubt, is intended as an emblem of that divine blessing, which like a copious dew from the heavens should come down upon that favoured spot. "There Jehovah had commanded the blessing, even life for ever." That very blessing which is the object of the hopes of Israel—eternal life; more particularly the out-pouring of the Spirit upon the seed of Israel in the latter day.

The Holy Ghost, I conceive, does not intend so much the usual assemblies of Israel on these hills, though these festivals were attended with a blessing to the faithful; but he has in view that great day, when the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and the gathering of his elect shall be accomplished; when, as we read in the CXth Psalm, "Jehovah shall send forth the sceptre of his power out of Zion"—"when in the day of his power, the concourse of his people shall be great on the holy hills," and "the dew of his progeny shall be greater than the multitudinous production of the womb of the morning."—"And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things:"—"and he shall destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations: he will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it."^c

^c Isaiah xxv. 7, 8.

PSALM CXXXIV.

FIFTEENTH SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 Lo! bless ye Jehovah, all ye servants of Jehovah;
Ye, who by night are stationed in the house of Jehovah,
- 2 Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary,^d
And bless ye Jehovah.
- 3 From Zion Jehovah give thee his blessing,
Who made heaven and earth.

^d Or, "in holiness."

EXPOSITION.

Lowth has imagined that this Psalm is nothing more than the alternate cry of two different divisions of the temple watch: the first watch addresses the second, reminding them of their duty; the second answers by a solemn blessing. The address and answer seem both to be a set form, which each division proclaimed or sung aloud at stated intervals, to notify the time of night. Many have admired the ingenuity of the conjecture, and have adopted the idea. We know generally that there was a nightly service in the temple:^e and Kimchi, a Jewish writer, represents those who by night stand in the house of the Lord, as holy men who rose from their beds in the night, and went to pray in the temple. We read, also, of "Anna, a prophetess," "which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day."^f And St. Paul, before Agrippa, speaking "of the hope of the promise made unto the fathers," gives us this remarkable description: "unto which our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come."

None, it is true, are waiting now in the temple of Jerusalem, looking for the fulfilment of the promise—"the

^e 2 Chron. xx.^f Luke ii. 37.

blessing out of Zion ;" i.e. the second advent of the Redeemer ; but we know that the temple and its solemnities of worship are in some sort to be restored, and that there shall be a people dwelling at Jerusalem, waiting day and night for the appearing of the Redeemer, and shall not be ashamed.

PSALM CXXXV.

Praise ye Jehovah.

- 1 PRAISE ye the name of Jehovah ;
Sing praise, ye servants of Jehovah,
- 2 Ye who are stationed in the house of Jehovah,
In the courts of the house of our Elohim :
- 3 Praise ye Jah, for Jehovah is good ;
Chant his name, for it is sweet ;
- 4 For Jah hath chosen Jacob for himself,
And Israel for his peculiar ' portion.'
- 5 Truly I know that Jehovah ' is ' great,
And that our Lord ' is ' above all Elohim.
- 6 Whatsoever Jehovah pleased
Hath he done in the heavens and on earth,
In the waters even amidst all their raging waves.
- 7 Raising up the clouds from the ends of the earth,
He maketh the lightnings for the rain,
Bringing out the winds from his treasures.
- 8 It was he who smote the first-born of Egypt,
Both of man and beasts :
- 9 He sent forth signs and miracles
In the midst of thee, O Egypt,
Upon Pharaoh and upon all his servants :

- 10 It was he who smote great nations,
And slew mighty kings :
- 11 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
And Ogg, the king of Bashan,
And all the kings of Canaan :
- 12 And he gave their lands for a heritage,
A heritage for Israel his people.
- 13 Jehovah, thy name is for ever ;
Jehovah, thy memorial from age to age.
- 14 Truly Jehovah will defend the right of his people,
And will be moved to pity for his servants.
- 15 The idols of the nations are silver and gold,
The work of men's hands :
- 16 They have a mouth, and speak not ;
They have eyes, and see not ;
- 17 They have ears, and hear not ;
Truly there is no breath in their nostrils :
- 18 They that make them shall be like to them,
Every one who trusteth in them.
- 19 O house of Israel, bless ye Jehovah ;
O house of Aaron, bless ye Jehovah ;
- 20 O house of Levi, bless ye Jehovah ;
Ye that fear Jehovah, bless ye Jehovah ;
- 21 Blessed be Jehovah, ' who cometh ' out at Zion,
Inhabiting Jerusalem.^s
Praise ye Jah.

^s Or,

" Who manifesteth his glory from Zion,
Causing it to rest upon Jerusalem."

EXPOSITION.

The general subject of this Psalm is obvious. The worshippers of God who stand in his courts are exhorted to praise the God of Israel. That God that hath chosen Israel, be it known, is "the Maker of heaven and earth," the sovereign Ruler in providence. His might was especially shown in the exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and in the events of their subsequent history. This wonderful interference of the Almighty is to be recorded and celebrated in the songs of his church throughout all ages, as a precedent and example of his aid to his people, and as a pledge of their future mercies in the latter days.

The vanity of idols and their worshippers is then contrasted with the confidence of the waiting people of Jehovah, which may apply to the idols of Antichrist as well as of the ancient pagans. But let his people, restored Israel especially, praise Jehovah—that Jehovah who is expected to come forth from Zion to the mighty conflict, and to inhabit Jerusalem, "the city of the great King;"—so shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no stranger pass through her any more,"^h &c.

^h Joel iii. 17.

PSALM CXXXVI.

1 CELEBRATE Jehovah, for he is good,

For his loving-kindnessⁱ is for ever.

2 Celebrate the Elohim of Elohim,

For his loving-kindness is for ever.

ⁱ "Tenderness," or "tender love." —Mercy, as I have before remarked, does not translate רַחֲמִים. Perhaps the old word loving-kindness is after all to be preferred—the love of kindred. "Can a woman forget," &c.

- 3 Celebrate the Lord of lords,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 4 —Him, who alone doeth great wonders,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 5 Him, who made the heavens by his wisdom,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 6 Him who spread the earth upon the waters,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 7 Him who made the great lights,
For his loving-kindness is for ever :
- 8 The sun to rule the day,
For his loving-kindness is for ever ;
- 9 The moon and stars to rule the night,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 10 —Him who smote Egypt in their first-born,
For his loving-kindness is for ever,
- 11 And brought out Israel from among them,
For his loving-kindness is for ever,
- 12 With a strong hand, and stretched-out arm,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 13 —Him who divided the Red Sea asunder,
For his loving-kindness is for ever ;
- 14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it,
For his loving-kindness is for ever :
- 15 And shook off Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 16 —Him who led his people in the desert,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 17 Him who smote great kings,
For his loving-kindness is for ever,
- 18 And slew mighty kings,
For his loving-kindness is for ever :

- 19 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
For his loving-kindness is for ever :
- 20 And Ogg, the king of Basan,
For his loving-kindness is for ever :
- 21 And gave their land for a heritage,
For his loving-kindness is for ever :
- 22 A heritage to Israel his servant,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 23 —Who hath thought upon us in our low estate,
For his loving-kindness is for ever ;
- 24 And hath rescued us from our enemies,
For his loving-kindness is for ever ;
- 25 Giving food unto all flesh,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.
- 26 Celebrate the El of heaven,
For his loving-kindness is for ever.

EXPOSITION.

This Psalm is upon the same subject as the last. It was probably a standing hymn of the Jewish church sung on various public occasions. See 1 Chron. xvi. 41 ; 2 Chron. vii. 3, 6 ; and xx. 21.

“ Rabbi Obadiah says it is an exhortation to the children of God, in the days of the Messiah, to praise the Lord.”^k This is remarkable, as perhaps no Psalm we have yet met with, appears to have less to do with futurity. I am persuaded, however, that the close of the Psalm has been too hastily passed over, and that, properly interpreted, it does relate to future times, and is parallel to the close of the former Psalm.

The theme of praise is the everlasting love or loving kindness of God to his chosen people—from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him;—the tender love of that

^k Dr. Gill.

God who created heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is;—of that God, who at the exodus, and on the journey of Israel through the desert, gave such instances of his power, and so many pledges of his constant regard for his people. The conclusion and the inference meant to be drawn is—It is this God, who in our humiliation or depression thinketh upon us, and redeemeth us, or will redeem us from the enemy, giving at that time spiritual food to all flesh, as well as daily bread.

The humiliation of the ancient people of God, I hardly need observe, is their present depression;¹ the enemy, the main actors in that last conflict so much in the view of the Spirit in all these prophetic songs. The “giving food for all flesh,” in connexion with the final deliverance of the Jews, is clearly explained by the comparison of a prophecy that we quoted on a former Psalm: “And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined, &c. &c.”

¹ So it appears Kimchi thought. Vide Dr. Gill.

PSALM CXXXVII.^m

- 1 By the waters of Babylon there we sat down, we also wept,
As we remembered Zion;
- 2 On the willows, in the midst of her,
We hung up our harps:
- 3 Because there they that led us captive asked us for a song,
And they that had caused our grief,ⁿ for mirth:

^m The ancient versions ascribe this Psalm to David, supposing, no doubt, that he wrote it by the spirit of prophecy.

ⁿ Perhaps, “And they that made game of us, for mirth.” “Those

that cause us to lament.” LEE.

הוֹלִלֵינוּ is considered by Kennicott, Mudge, and Horsley, as a Chaldaism for שוֹלִלֵינוּ Simon derives it from

the Arab. هَلَل تَل stravit.

“Sing us one of the songs of Zion.”

4 How can we sing the song of Jehovah
In a foreign land?

5 If I can forget thee, O Jerusalem,
My right hand may be forgotten.^o

6 My tongue would cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I made not mention of thee;

If I exalt not Jerusalem
Above my chief joy.^p

7 Remember, O Jehovah, against the children of Edom
The day of Jerusalem,

Who say, Rase her! rase her!
Even to her very foundation.

8 The daughter of Babylon hath been laid waste:

^qBlessed is he that shall requite thee,
As thou hast served us.

9 Blessed is he who shall seize^r and dash
Thy little ones against the rock.

^o Or, “My right hand would forget its skill.”

^p “If I carried not up Jerusalem above the sum of my happiness.” **על ראש** “Literally, If I do not exalt Jerusalem above the chief, or top, of my joy.” **LOWTH.**—“If I carry not up our Jerusalem—to the sum total of my joy.” Among the

various senses of the word **שָׂרָא** one is a *sum total* of an account, which was anciently set at the top, not as with us at the bottom of the account.” **HORSLEY.** See also Parkhurst in verb.—“**רָא** has the force of *our*.” **HORSLEY.**

^q “Most happy and prosperous.”

^r Or, “take hold of.”

EXPOSITION.

The subject and meaning of this beautiful Psalm need no explanation. Every one can feel for the poor captive in the land of his enemies, amid their taunts and idle jeers, affected to the heart at the recollection of his native country, and refusing to rejoice while she was laid in ruins. So,

towards the end of this desolation of Jerusalem, another Jewish Captive betrayed by his looks before the Persian king his "sorrow of heart." "Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire."^s "Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people."^t

The imprecations at the close of the Psalm we must not mistake. In the first place let us bear in mind this is not the actual composition of the captives, expressing their own feelings as any other mortals might; but it is the language of the prophetic Spirit, describing the sorrows of the people of God, when deprived of their religious privileges: not teaching them by corresponding feelings to invoke the day of vengeance on their enemies, but still as the righteous Advocate and Patron of his people, inspiring his prophets to pronounce and forebode the just retribution, demanding it of the righteous Judge. In this sense there is a cry that ascends day and night before God from his elect to avenge them of their adversaries. A more difficult question, however, remains to be answered, how this Psalm bears as a prophecy on the general subject of the Psalms—the great events of the last days. I have the following to offer: either that it may have been the intention of the Holy Ghost, that the captivity of Israel in Babylon, and the predicted destruction of that nation, and of the insidious neighbours of Jerusalem who rejoiced in the day of her calamity, and urged on her ruin, should all serve as a type of the last captivity, and the final destruction of all the enemies of the people of God, together with the mystic Babylon, the chief victim doomed to be destroyed: or, that if the suggestion of the ancient Jews be correct,^v that by the term Edom is meant the Romans,^v

^s Neh. ii. 3.

^t Lam. iii. 48.

^v "The TARGUM is: *Michael*, the prince of *Jerusalem*, said, Remember, O Lord, the people of Edom, who destroyed Jerusalem. Many Jewish writers, as *Eben Ezra* observes, interpret this of the destruction of *Jerusalem* by the Romans: who said, *Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof*; or, *make it naked or bare to the foundation*." Dr. GILL.

^v That part of the original population of the city of Rome were Edomites, See Niebuhr on the Roman History.

under the persuasion of the truth of which hypothesis I have made the translation of the latter part of the Psalm; the spirit of prophecy means to hold forth the awful fate of the former persecutor, the literal Babylon, as an example and prognostication of the similar fate of the more inveterate adversary of the latter days.

This will perhaps recall to the reader's mind Milton's verses on the Massacre of the Protestants by the Papists of Piedmont.

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold :
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not : in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant ; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learned thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

PSALM CXXXVIII.*

- 1 I WILL acknowledge thee, with my whole heart ;
Before the Elohim will I praise thee ;^y
- 2 I will worship towards thy holy mansion,
And will laud thy name.

* Ascribed to David.

^y "Before thee, O God, will I sing praise." GUSSETIUS.

- In thy tender love, and in thy faithfulness,
 Ay, in all thy name thou hast magnified thy word.^a
- 3 In the day when I call and thou wilt answer me,
 Wilt thou animate my soul with strength.
- 4 All the kings of the earth shall acknowledge thee, O Jehovah,
 When they have heard the words of thy mouth ;
- 5 And they shall sing in the ways^a of Jehovah,
 When the glory of Jehovah is magnified :
- 6 When Jehovah has been exalted, and the lowly shall see ' it,'
 And the proud shall perceive ' it' from afar.^b
- 7 When I walk in the midst of distress thou wilt quicken me,
 Thou wilt stretch out thine hand against the fury of mine
 enemies.
- And thy right hand will give me the victory :
 Jehovah will accomplish that which concerneth me.^c
- 8 O Jehovah, thy tender love is for ever ;
 Thou wilt not forsake the work of thine hands.

^a The sense of these two lines is sometimes disputed. I would construe **אמרהך** with **הגדלת** Thou hast magnified thy word ; i. e. hast fulfilled in a wonderful manner thy promise ; or, hast afforded copious matter for praise concerning thy tender love, &c.—“What if we should read **שמך** **אמרהך** ‘Thou hast magnified thy name above all, according to thy

promise.” HORSLEY. “Thy name above every name.” HARE after Sept.

^a “Processions.”

^b “Truly Jehovah is high ; but he hath respect unto the lowly ; and the haughty, from afar, he maketh to feel.” HORSLEY.

^c “Jehovah will bring things to a conclusion for me.” Idem.

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley's account of the contents of this Psalm may serve as a guide to its exposition : he calls it “prophe-
 tic of the general deliverance. Messiah speaks in his human
 character.” That the general deliverance of the church of
 Christ, and the exaltation of his kingdom, is the subject of
 this Psalm also, is plain and indisputable. A question,

indeed, might be started, whether Christ or his church be the speaker; but in truth they are identified together, when the Redeemer is considered in his mystic character as the head of his church, which is "his spouse and his body."

We should not, therefore, I think, say that Messiah speaks in his human character, which might be supposed to relate to his personal conflict alone, but in his mystic character, in respect of his members which are upon earth, and as usual in special reference to the last, great, and now nearly approaching conflict. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

The Psalm anticipates an era when our great Advocate shall have to praise God for the fulfilment of all his gracious purposes, and all his promises and kind engagements to his church—the day when all his prayers on her behalf shall be answered. (Ver. 4.) At that time the kingdom of our God shall fully come, and his Christ shall reign over all the earth; "all kings shall bow down before him, and all nations shall do him service." The humble follower of the Lamb beholds it and is glad: the proud opposer, too, must see the exaltation of Jehovah, and feel his vengeance.

This is the great subject in the view of the Psalmist, and with this prospect he consoles himself, and teaches his followers to console themselves, while his people shall be waiting the fulfilment of these promises in circumstances of grief and distress. Jehovah will always keep alive a holy seed: in the worst of times, when the enemies' power is at the highest, he will restrain their fury, and at length "his right hand," his visible interference, will give his people the victory. Christ and his people are equally the workmanship of his own hand, and he will never forsake his Anointed till he has brought his many sons to glory, and shall arise and have mercy upon his land and his people.

PSALM CXXXIX.

- 1 O JEHOVAH, thou hast searched me and known me,
 2 Thou hast known my sitting down and my rising up,
 Thou hast understood my thoughts^d afar off:
 3 Thou hast examined^e my path and my bed,
 And thou wast familiar with all my ways.^f
 4 When there was no word upon my tongue,
 Lo ! thou, Jehovah, knewest the whole.
 5 Thou hast fashioned^g me behind and before,
 And laid thine hand upon me.
 6 Too marvellous 'was' this knowledge for me,
 It was high, I was not sufficient for it.^h
 7 Whither can I go from thy Spirit,
 And whither can I flee from thy presence ?
 8 Should I climb the heavens, thou art there ;
 And should I spread my couch in Hades, lo ! thou art there :ⁱ
 9 Should I take the wings of the morning,
 Should I settle beyond the sea,
 10 There, also, thy hand would lead me,
 And thy right hand would hold me.
 11 And, should I say, Surely the darkness will cover me !
 Even the night would be light around me ;
 12 Ay, the darkness is no darkness to thee,
 But night is light as day ;
 As is the light so is the darkness.^k

^d Or, "desires."^e Or, "sifted." "סָרַסַּר *sparsit, ventilavit*—a ventilando, h. e. executiando *cognovit*."—SIMON.^f "Familiars—notas tibi fecisti." Idem.^g The word signifies *to straiten*,*to press against*, also *to observe* as an enemy. Perhaps the notion of forming a cheese as in Job.^h Perhaps, "I could not reach it by any language of mine."ⁱ "Behold I meet thee." HORSLEY.^k Or, "To thee are both alike."

- 13 Truly **תָּחַט** formedst¹ my reins,
Thou didst compact^m me in my mother's womb.
- 14 I acknowledge thee, for wonderfully was I composed :
Marvellous were thy works, my soul hath known it well.ⁿ
- 15 My substance was not concealed from thee,
While I was being formed in the secret 'place,'
While I was curiously wrought^o in the nether regions;^p
- 16 Thine eyes beheld my unformed substance ;^q
And on thy book all 'my parts' were transcribed ;
Day after day were they formed, and not one was wanting.
- 17 How wonderful are thy thoughts concerning me, O El !
How great is the sum of them !
- 18 Should I number them, they are more than the sand ;
'I awoke to life, and am ever with thee.
- 19 Surely thou wilt slay the wicked 'one,' O Eloah,
And the men of blood that have revolted from me ;
- 20 Who have exchanged **תֵּיבָה** for an evil invention :
A worthless vanity exalted as thine equal.^s

¹ Or, "producedst."

^m Or, "put together."

ⁿ See the last-mentioned writer.

I had once rendered these lines :

I acknowledge thee with reverence,
I am astonished at thy wonderful works :
My soul is greatly impressed.

^o "Like variegated or embroidery work."

^p **תַּחְתִּיּוֹת אֶרֶץ** is, I conceive, no more than a phrase for bades, or the nether regions. When I was formed in the bades of my mother's womb. Unless some further mysterious operation on the Saviour, in the departed state, be intended, in his mystical body.

^q "My unrolled ball," or, my unrolled lineaments. Perhaps the first filaments of the body, produced in pairs. See Parkhurst on **גֵּלֶם** and Simon on **אֶחָד**. The metaphor I conceive to be the unrolling of a ball

of thread, with which the embroiderer works his curious patterns ; the whole passage, however, must be acknowledged to be very obscure. Horsley translates,

My skeleton was not concealed from thee,
Nor my fine-woven covering, what time I was
fashioned
In secret, in the nether regions of the earth.

Thine eyes beheld my shapeless lump,
And in thy book all of them were written,
All the while they were forming, while as yet
there was none of them.

^r Horsley is of opinion that the verb **עֲוָרָה** is lost in this place—**יִשְׁנָה** "my perpetuity, i. e. the whole and every successive moment of my life." Idem.

^s Or, "one set out as thine equal," or, "exalted for an idol," or, "a man of thine arranging." The ancient versions, Houbigant, and Kennicott, read **לְמוֹצָא נִשְׁאָר** "to a wicked purpose." **לְשׁוֹא** "to temerity." Idem.

- 21 Do I not hate them, O Jehovah, that hate thee?
Am I not indignant at them that rise up against thee?
- 22 I have hated them with the utmost hatred,
I have counted them for mine enemies.
- 23 Examine me, O El, and know my heart;
Prove me, and know my thoughts,
- 24 And see if there be any worship of an idol within me,
And lead me into the way that hath been from everlasting.[†]

[†] "The way of old times." HORSLEY.

EXPOSITION.

Messiah, in the former Psalm, had spoken of himself as "the work of God's own hands:" meaning, doubtless, that both the fleshly body that was prepared for him, and the mystical body that he was to generate, were the workmanship of God in an especial sense: not his workmanship, as all other creatures are, which are produced in the ordinary course of nature, but a work formed by the immediate and miraculous interference of the Almighty, suspending the general laws he had imposed on nature, in order to accomplish a particular object of his sovereign will.

This I take to be the key to the meaning of the Psalm before us. Christ in his human nature expresses his sense of the omniscience of the Deity, and teaches us what man should think of the GODHEAD.

The inferiority of knowledge owned in the 6th verse, we may, consistently with "the Christian verity," interpret of the lower nature of the Son of God, more especially personating his church: he was "inferior to the Father as touching his manhood."—"My Father is greater than I." In respect of this inferior nature, his faculties, of course, were bounded by the finite capacity of the human intellect. Hence he was said "to grow in knowledge," "to learn obedience" in suffering; and often in these prophetic songs have we heard him pray for instruction and preservation.

Verse the 13th and the following verses have a reference, I conceive, in the first place, to the miraculous formation of the holy child Jesus, in the womb of the blessed Virgin. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also, that HOLY THING which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

But the meaning of this part of the Psalm is doubtless to be extended to the formation of the mystical body of Christ. Indeed there is an identity between the two, which, though like some circumstances in the union of the two natures in Christ, it may be incomprehensible to our confined understandings, is clearly asserted in Scripture. It is not a mere figure of speech that the Apostle makes use of: "We being many are one body in Christ, and members in respect of one another."—"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones—they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and his church." Himself has compared this mysterious generation of his mystic body to a "grain of wheat falling into the earth and dying, and bringing forth much fruit."

In respect of this formation by the regenerating spirit of the second Adam, we may well exclaim with the Psalm, "How wonderful are thy thoughts concerning me, &c.:" or with the Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

Understanding the language of the Psalm in this sense as extending to the formation or quickening of the mystical body of Christ, we immediately perceive the connexion of the latter part of the Psalm. To Christ, in respect of the members of his mystical body, is opposed, as is usual in the prophetic page, the wicked 'one'—the bloody persecutors of the latter days—the members of the great apostacy, that have revolted to vanity, and to the cultivation of an idolatrous superstition: this is an object of the Redeemer's hatred and holy indignation. And this hatred of idolatry he diffuses into the hearts of his people; and they, to use the language

of later prophecies, do not "worship the beast nor his image, nor receive his mark in their forehead."

Yet, perhaps, in a subordinate sense, some of the members of Christ may have been, and may be still hurt and defiled by the superstitions of Antichrist. And in another view that the Scriptures have taken of this affair, the church generally, and, if we may so speak, territorially, is considered as defiled and polluted by the presence of Antichrist, "sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is a God." It is "an abomination that maketh desolate," of which "the sanctuary" must be "cleansed." "He will gather out of his kingdom all that offend, and all that do iniquity." These observations will enable us to put a right construction on the prayer in the concluding verses of the Psalm.

PSALM CXL.^u

1 DELIVER me, O Jehovah, from the evil man,^{*}

Preserve me from the man of violence :

2 Who have devised evil in their hearts ;

All the day they stir up war :^y

3 They brandish their tongue like a serpent,

The venom of asps is under their lips.

SELAH.

4 Keep me, O Jehovah, from the hand of the wicked 'one,'^z

Preserve me from the man of violence,

Who have meditated my fall.^z

^u This is one of the Psalms ascribed to David.

^{*} "Man of sin."

^y Or, "congregate for."

^z So Horsley. Literally, "Who have thought to shove down my steps."

- 5 The proud have concealed a trap for me,
And have spread a net with cords;
By the way-side the snares are set for me.^a
SELAH.
- 6 I have said unto Jehovah, Thou art my El;
Give ear, O Jehovah, to the voice of my prayer.
- 7 Jehovah, my Lord, the strength of my salvation,
Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.^b
- 8 Grant not, O Jehovah, the desires of the wicked 'one,'
Suffer not his device to take effect.
- 9 'When' they lift up the head round about me,
The mischief of their own lips shall overwhelm them.
- 10 'Coals of fire shall be thrust down upon them;
He will cast them into the raging gulf,'^c to rise no more.
- 11 The man of tongue^d shall not be established on the earth;
The man of violence, evil shall hunt to the precipice.^e
- 12 I knew that Jehovah would maintain
The right of the afflicted, the judgment of the destitute:
- 13 Ay, that the righteous should confess thy name,
And the upright be established in thy presence.

^a "They have set."

^b "What time the armour rattled."
Literally, "In the day of clashing."

^c Hare and Horsley expunge סִיחָ
and connect the verb רָמַן with the
nouns following.

^d Or thunderbolts.

^e Horsley, following Parkhurst,

renders מַדְמַדִּים "the chasms of
the yawning earth." Simon derives it
from the Arab. *fluxit aqua*. "He
shall cast them into deep pits." SECKEN.

^f "Braggart." HORSLEY.

^g Hare and Horsley.

EXPOSITION.

The enemies of Christ that stand up in the last conflict are so plainly portrayed here, that, after reading the former Psalms, it is almost impossible to mistake the subject of the present. The catastrophe too, their destruction by fire, and their being cast into the burning gulf, after an unsuccessful

plot against Christ and his saints, is too characteristic to be mistaken. We may add also, as another sign of the times foreboded, the issue of the conflict, the joy and prosperity of the righteous, once afflicted and persecuted. "The man of tongue" is evidently a symbol of the corrupt teachers of the latter days, with the "man of sin" at their head. They have often been distinguished in a similar manner in these prophetic Psalms, and we have already compared them with "the little horn" of the prophecies of Daniel, "having a mouth speaking great things," even "blasphemies against the Most High"—and with the prophecies of the New Testament respecting "false teachers," and that 'wicked one' of St. Paul.

"The man of violence" also, we have already seen, by comparison with the other prophecies, to symbolize the civil or sovereign power of the fourth monarchy, exercised as an instrument of persecution against the saints. We have only once more to quote the clear prediction in the Revelation to show how "the man of tongue," and "the man of violence," are at the last day cut off, by the presence of Him who is revealed in flaming fire. "And the BEAST was taken, and with him the FALSE PROPHET, that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."

PSALM CXLI.^h

- 1 O JEHOVAH, I have called upon thee, hasten unto me ;
Give ear unto my voice when I call upon thee.
- 2 Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense,
The lifting up of my hands as the evening oblation.

^h A Psalm of David.

- 3 O Jehovah, set a watch before my mouth,
Guard the door of my lips :
- 4 Let not my heart be moved to any evil thing,
That I should practise iniquity with the wicked 'one,'
With the men that are contrivers of vanity,ⁱ
And let me not eat of their delicacies :
- 5 Let the Just One smite me^k in tender love^l and reprove me ;
Let not the oil of the wicked 'one'^m anoint my head.
- 6 But yet again will I intercede in their calamities,
When their princes are precipitated from the sides of the
rock :
Then shall they hear my words, that they are sweet.
- 7 As when they cut and cleave wood upon the earth,
Our bones are scattered at the mouth of Hades.ⁿ
- 8 Surely our eyes are upon thee, Jehovah, Lord ;
In thee is my shelter, leave not my soul destitute.
- 9 Preserve me from the trap that they have laid for me,
And from the snares of the workers of vanity.
- 10 The wicked shall fall together into their own nets,
While that I escape withal.

ⁱ "Idolaters celebrating their vain and wicked rites." HORSLEY.

^k Some of the versions appear to have read ילמדני; but see Simon in הלם ילמדני *contundit me*, scilicet plagis; vel *obtundit me*, eo sensu, quo Latini *obtundere* dicunt pro *sapius repetendo, inculcare*.

^l Εὐ ελεει. LXX.—In misericordiâ. VULG.

^m The versions had רשע יניח "anoint, impinguit," says Kennicott, "from the Arabic נח pinguis evasit." HORSLEY.

ⁿ Horsley observes, that "the image is that of a great slaughter, that the bones of the unburied dead make a litter upon the surface of the earth, like a carpenter's chips about a saw-pit."

EXPOSITION.

The same final catastrophe, which formed the subject of the former Psalm, is still in the view of the prophetic Spirit. A particular prayer, however, is interwoven with the pro-

phcey, in which the great Advocate prays that his church, exposed to the snares and corruption of the last days, may not be betrayed into a false profession of the faith, or be drawn aside to have any participation in the vanities and idolatries of Antichrist. For this end, the great Head of the church seems, in his wisdom, to supplicate, that his chosen remnants may be chastened by the kind discipline of a righteous God—that, humbled by poverty or some other afflictions, his people may not be partakers of that prosperity which Antichrist and his followers may possess in this world, nor be sharers in the enjoyment of those luxuries and sensual delights, which it seems will particularly distinguish the last stage of the apostacy, even on the very eve of the day of their destruction.

This would, indeed, prove a snare and a temptation to many; but thus the Lord would keep his people from conforming to the present world, to their ruin and destruction.

The church is taught by the prayer here offered for her, not to desire much intercourse with the apostates in the season of their prosperity; but to wait that appointed season, as was intimated in the last Psalm, “when evil shall hunt the man of violence to the precipice;” that is, in the language of this Psalm, “when their princes are precipitated from the sides of the rock”—when the leaders of the confederacy should meet their doom: then will come the happy era, when the words of the messengers of the Lord of glory, now despised, will be welcome news to “the remainder of men,” who, as we are told, “will seek the Lord.” But as the close of the Psalm intimates, it is through scenes of persecution and dangerous corruption that we arrive at this period. But he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

PSALM CXLII.

1 I WILL cry unto Jehovah with my voice,
I will supplicate unto Jehovah with my voice.

2 I will pour forth my complaint unto him ;
I will spread my distress before him.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,

3 Then thou knewest my path ;

In the way where I walked
They had hid a trap for me.

4 ° He looked on the right and beheld,
And there was none who perceived.

Flight was cut off from me,
No one was guarding my soul.

5 I cried unto thee, O Jehovah :
I said, Thou art my refuge,
My portion in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry,
For I am brought very low :

Rescue me from my pursuers,
For they have prevailed against me.

7 Bring my soul out of prison,^p
That I may celebrate thy name.

The righteous will throng around me,^q
When thou shalt give me my reward.^r

° If our present copies are correct, we must understand these two verses of the adversary, looking about to ascertain if he may seize his victim with impunity. The ancient versions, which many follow, read in the first person.

^p "Hades." HORSLEY.

^q "In me shall the justified be crowned." Idem.

^r "The just expect when thou shalt reward me." Idem.

EXPOSITION.

Bishop Horsley entitles this Psalm, "A Prayer of Messiah when he was taken and deserted"—alluding to "the desertion of the Apostles, when our Lord was seized in the Garden." He makes a question, however, whether "something more mystical may not be meant."

The desertion of our Lord by the Apostles, at the time of his apprehension, could not be a matter of such deep regret with our blessed Master: for what assistance did he look for from them? Or if we have respect to the adversary, little would he regard all the assistance that the feeble companions of Jesus of Nazareth could give to his persecuted prey. The desertion therefore, I conclude, is that more serious withdrawing of the divine presence, which seemed to our Lord himself, and seemed to his adversaries, to leave his soul a helpless unprotected victim in their hands.

This was the "hour of darkness," and the powers of darkness hastened to seize their helpless prey. The almighty Captive lay for a certain period bound in their hands, bound by those cords by which "it was impossible he should be holden:" yet still for a period, till God loosed the pains of death, he lay bound as a helpless and deserted prisoner!

From a comparison of some former Psalms on the same subject, I conclude, that the confinement of the holy soul of Jesus in the prison of hell, is what is especially alluded to. It is out of the "belly of hell" that he offers this prayer. The claim of God as his "portion in the land of the living," is intended to contrast his present situation in the regions of the dead, with his hopes, which, though he was the SINNER'S SURETY, were built upon the promise of God.

The prisoner prays for deliverance, that he may glorify the name of God—he anticipates the receiving of his reward, and the gathering of all his justified people around him. For these in truth are his reward, the fruit of "the travail of his soul," "the people that he hath bought with his death."

And it appears from various Scriptures, that those of his purchased people who had died in faith, and were waiting in the resting-place of the spirits of the just for the fulfilment of the covenant of their peace, when the debt was paid and the prisoner released, heard the glad tidings. For for this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that were dead—they were made perfect and lived to God in the spirit—prepared for a glorious resurrection, with all his waiting people upon the earth, whom he has begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

PSALM CXLIII.

- 1 O JEHOVAH, hear my prayer ; hearken to my supplications :
In thy truth answer me, in thy righteousness.
- 2 But thou wilt not enter into judgment with thy servant,
Because all the living* would not be justified in thy sight.
- 3 Truly the enemy has pursued my soul,
He hath trodden my life on the earth :
- 4 He hath made me to dwell in the midst of darkness,
Like the dead to eternity ;

And my spirit within me fainteth for me,
My heart is confounded.
- 5 I have remembered the days of old, I have thought of all thy
work,
Of the work of thy hands.
- 6 I will complain, and stretch out my hands unto thee,
My soul is as a parched land.

SELAH.

* "Because none of the living," more literally, "each living one." See the Exposition.

7 Make haste to answer me, O Jehovah,
My spirit is consumed.

Hide not thy face from me when I am sentenced,^a
With them that go down into the pit.

8 O make me to hear early thy tender love,
For on thee I trust.

Make me to know this path that I tread,
For to thee I lift up my soul.

9 Deliver me from my enemy, Jehovah;
In thee have I sheltered.

10 Instruct me to do that which is thy pleasure,
For thou art my Eloah.

11 Let thy good Spirit lead me to the land of uprightness;
Quicken me, Jehovah, for thy name's sake.

In thy righteousness bring my soul out of distress,
And in thy tender love cut off my enemy;

12 And destroy all the adversaries of my soul,
For I am thy servant.

^a When I am assimilated, or made like, or, "when I am, by judicial sentence, reduced to the situation of." "משל" notionem *premendi, impri-mendi, premente manu tractandi*. Coll.

Arab. *משל* מִשַּׁל—"Alii etymol. ita constituunt: *proprie jus et æquum administravit*, suum cuique tribuendo, *causas æquavit*," &c. SIM. Lex. Heb.

EXPOSITION.

I cannot hesitate in referring this Psalm to the Redeemer, in the same time and circumstances as the former; when his righteous soul, the victim of our transgressions, had sunk helpless and deserted in death, and ere as yet the eternal Judge had loosened the pains of death.

I know I shall be thought bold, and shall perhaps, at first sight, be generally condemned for reversing the meaning of so celebrated a text as that which forms the second verse of this Psalm.

The common sentiment extracted from verse the second of this Psalm, is most just and important; it is, in fact, tantamount to a thousand declarations of Scripture. It is extremely like that of St. Paul: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." One can hardly entertain a suspicion but that it is right. If, however, there is correctness and strict propriety in the language of Scripture, which I cannot but think there will be found to be, when we rightly understand its meaning, the sentiment expressed in the common translation does not appear consistent with the context:—taking the words "truth" and "righteousness" in their constant senses as employed in the Psalms. "In thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness; and enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." But if the suppliant, in his distress, appeals to the faith and righteousness of his Judge, why does he fear that he should enter upon his cause? For this is the true amount of "entering into judgment." It is the very thing he wants, in order that he may be delivered from all the punishments and griefs to which his malicious adversaries have doomed him. And this is in truth one of the most frequent appeals of the Psalmist: "Judge my cause, O Jehovah!"—"Judge me in thy righteousness"—"Judge me according to thy righteousness, and according to the cleanness of my hands in thy sight, &c. &c." See also the last verse of this Psalm: which, as an imprecation ought not to be, and as a prophecy could not be applied to the personal enemies of David in Absalom's rebellion, the subject assigned by many to this Psalm.*

Now, we are sufficiently informed, from a comparison of the general tenour of the Psalms, who this righteous servant of God is, and why he was afflicted and put to grief, though he had done no wrong, "nor was guile found in his mouth." "He bare the sin of many," "for the transgression of my

* I still retain a preference for this exposition; though we may understand the words in their common acceptation, as spoken by the great Advocate of his people deprecating on their behalf the fatherly chastisement of the righteous Judge. Compare Ps cxxx.

people was he stricken to death." The prisoner, therefore, could not receive the reward of his own righteousness, until he had paid the penalty of the transgression of the Lord's people. He "died for their sins," and therefore could not rise again, or have the pains of death loosed, till they were justified in the sight of God. This I believe to be the meaning of the second clause of the verse. The Almighty Judge would not do justice to his righteous Servant, or vindicate his wrongs upon his cruel adversaries, until "all the living" were justified, until the SINNER'S SURETY had made satisfaction for the sins of all his redeemed—until "he had tasted death for every one" of "the many children" he was "to bring to glory"—not till after he should "be made perfect through sufferings."

I have only further to remark, that כִּלְיָהוּ is one of the first epithets applied to the destined subjects of salvation by the "seed of the woman."^y

Having prefaced these remarks, I may leave the reader to explain the remainder of the Psalm. It will be found very similar to the last, whether he prefers the application to the Messiah personally, or rather to Him as the great advocate of His people praying for the living members of His mystical body the Church.

^y Genesis iii. 20.

PSALM CXLIV.^z

- 1 BLESSED be Jehovah my rock,
Who traineth my hands for the conflict,
My fingers to wage war :
- 2 My favourer and my fortress,
My high place and my refuge ;

^z The Psalm is ascribed to David.

My shield, and he in whom I sheltered ;
Who subdued the nations^a under me.

3 Jehovah, what is man, that thou dost notice him ?
The son of mortal man, that thou takest account of him ?

4 Man is like to a vapour,
His days to a passing shadow !

5 O Jehovah, bow thy heavens and come down ;
Touch the mountains, that they may smoke.

6 ^b Dart the lightnings and disperse them abroad,
Send forth thine arrows and scatter them :

7 Put forth thine hand from above, deliver me,
And draw me out of the great waters,
From the hand of the children of the stranger :

8 Whose mouth hath spoken vanity,
And their right hand hath been a right hand of falsehood.^c

9 O Elohim, I will sing a new song unto thee,
Upon a ten-stringed lute will I chant thee.

10 He hath given victory unto his king,^d
He hath delivered David his servant from the sword of
iniquity ;

11 He hath freed me and delivered me
From the hand of the children of the stranger :

Whose mouth hath spoken vanity,
And their right hand hath been a right hand of falsehood—

^a עַמִּים עֲמִים Kennicott, &c.

^b Or, "Flash."

^c "Rather, 'hath spoken;' 'but their right hand is a right hand of falsehood;' i. e. their right hand has been false to themselves; it has failed in the execution of their high threats." BISHOP HORSLEY. Others, however,

perhaps with greater probability, interpret the right hand, as the right hand given in pledge, by those who have been false to their engagements.

^d "Perhaps לְמֶלֶךְ *unto his king*. Archbishop Secker." HORSLEY. The Syriac read מֶלֶךְ in the singular number.

12 Whose 'mouth hath said,'

"Our sons," in their youth, are as well-grown plants,^f
Our daughters like the carved pillars^g in the structure of a
temple.^h

13 Our filled garner supply all manner of food,
Our flocks are thousands, ten thousands!

14 In our streets the yoked cattle drag the burden;ⁱ
There is no breaking in, and no sallying forth,
And there is no outcry in our public places.

15 Blessed are the people with whom it is thus."

—BLESSED ARE THE PEOPLE WHOSE ELOHIM IS JEHOVAH!

^f The *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, *Ethiopic*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* versions read what follows in the third person plural: "Whose sons are." Understanding it of the strange children. Bishop Hare and Le Clerc were of this opinion, and Kennicott seems inclined to adopt it: the construction, however, may be best preserved by understanding אמרן or פיהם דבר after אשר.

^g The Targum teaches us to understand the plants alluded to, to be the stately palm-tree.

^g Or, "angles." Michaelis prefers the sense of *columns*.

^h Or, "palaces."

ⁱ "אלפים" proprie συζυγες, boves jugum pati edocti." See Simon. Being in the masculine gender, it surely ought not to be referred to the gestation of the female: besides, the more usual meaning of כבלי is *onus sibi imposuit, oneravit se, hinc portavit, bajulavit* (uti Syr. Chald. Sam.)—"מכבליים onerati, onusti"—"vel oneribus trahendis occupati." Idem.

EXPOSITION.

There are several expressions in this Psalm similar to what we read in the XVIIIth Psalm. And, no doubt, it is to be referred to the spiritual David—"the Beloved." The "strange children," or "the children of the stranger," are those apostate nations who had once feignedly submitted to the religion of Jesus Christ, but who afterwards combined against the Lord and against his Christ: "Let us burst their bands, and cast away their cords from us." Compare the subjects both of the XVIIIth and XXIId Psalms.^k

^k "R. Saadiah Gaon interpreted this Psalm of the Messiah." Dr. GILL.

“These children of the stranger” are described, before their final overthrow by His hand who is manifested in flaming fire, as boasting in their prosperity, the splendour and gaiety of their youth, the luxurious plenty they enjoy, and the traffic of their thronged streets, flourishing in peace and safety. And notwithstanding the wars and tumults which forebode the coming of the Son of Man, and which, perhaps, immediately led to the mighty catastrophe—notwithstanding these “signs of the times,” the prophetic Scriptures do certainly give us a picture of a world living in peace and luxury, when the day of the Lord overtakes it as a thief. “As it was in the days of Noah,” and “of Lot,” “so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded, they married, and were given in marriage,” “and knew not until the day came.”—“The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.”

But especially observe in the Revelation of St. John, the symbolical representation of the merchants of the earth, weeping and mourning over the great city Babylon; “she that hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously.”

“The great city” is not a symbol of the city of Rome alone; but represents the outward church, overrun with the abominations of Antichrist. And, if I mistake not, superstition and idolatry are not so much the characteristics of these last times, though they will continue and have a partial sway to the end, as the atheistical or sadducean principles. Men, professedly Christian, and keeping up for political purposes the feeble institutions of their antiquated religion, or, perhaps, letting them moulder neglected in their ruins, will be content to live without God in the world, hating the true religion and its ordinances; and too much enlightened to be the dupes altogether of a false superstition, they will set light by all religion. The interest of commerce, the improvement of agriculture, the cultivation of the arts of luxury, and the means of increasing public and private wealth, will then be all in all. Merchants are princes:

and not the teachers of religion, but “the inventors of evil things,” and the professors of the histrionic art, are the characters that engage the public attention.

This exposition, however, it must be owned, comes too late for a prophecy; it too nearly resembles the present state of things through Christendom in general. And how many are ready to congratulate the world on these improvements in the state of society, on the successful cultivation of the arts and sciences, and all the increased conveniences and securities of modern life, with its multiplied elegancies and enjoyments! “Blessed are the people that are in such a case.”

But there is one fatal consideration in the contemplation of this happiness: Christ and his holy religion are forgotten and neglected. “Blessed rather,” we must learn to say, “are the people that have Jehovah for their God!”

PSALM CXLV.¹

- N I WILL extol thee, my Eloah, the king,
 And I will bless thy name for ever and ever.
 2 All the day long will I bless thee,
 And praise thy name for ever and ever.
 3 Great is Jehovah, and most worthy of praise,
 And his greatness is unsearchable.
 4 Age to age shall laud thy work,
 And shall declare thy power.
 5 They shall talk of the glorious splendour of thy majesty,
 And dwell upon thy wondrous works.

¹ This is the last of the alphabetical Psalms, and is ascribed to David. The Nun hemistich is wanting, and is thus supplied in the versions: “Jehovah

is faithful in all his words, and holy in all his doings.” For the different readings see Kennicott and the versions.

- 1 They shall tell of thy tremendous power,
 And shall recount thy mighty deeds.
- 2 They shall publish the memorial of thy great goodness,
 And celebrate thy righteousness.
- 3 Gracious and compassionate is Jehovah,
 Slow to anger and great in loving-kindness.
- 4 Jehovah is good unto every one,
 And his compassion is over all his works.
- 5 All thy works, O Jehovah, shall acknowledge thee,
 And all thy beloved ones shall bless thee.
- 6 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom,
 And tell of all thy glorious works :
- 7 To make known unto men thy might,
 And the glorious majesty of thy kingdom.^m
- 8 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
 And thy dominion is for all ages.
- 9
- 10 Jehovah is the support of all them that fall,
 And the lifter up of all them that are bowed down.
- 11 The eyes of all wait upon thee,
 And thou givest them their food in its season.
- 12 Thou openest thy hand,
 And fillest every living creature with pleasure.
- 13 Righteous is Jehovah in all his words,
 And kind in all his doings.
- 14 Jehovah is near to all that call upon him,
 To all who call upon him in truth.
- 15 He will accomplish the desire of them that fear him,
 And will hear their cry and save them.

^m For these four lines see Horsley and the Septuagint.

☞ Jehovah preserveth all them that love him,
And he will destroy all the wicked.

☞ My mouth shall declare the praise of Jehovah,
And all flesh shall bless his holy name :

For ever and ever.

EXPOSITION.

The praise of Jehovah is the entire subject of this Psalm. Age to age shall declare it, and the wonderful theme shall swell in importance as it goes down from generation to generation. The praise begins with the Gospel message, the memorial of Jehovah “gracious and compassionate, &c.” All the works of Jehovah in his new creation shall confess him. His beloved shall make the promised kingdom of Messiah, with all its glory and power, and the wonderful consequences to mankind, the subject of their conversation and testimony.

Of the happy times of that kingdom, I am led by the connexion to understand the verses towards the close of the Psalm, rather than of the ordinary dispensations of a kind and benevolent Providence, as the world is at present constituted. We cannot doubt to what the last verse refers: “All flesh is to bless the holy name of God,” and that “for ever and ever.” God in Christ has now reconciled the world unto himself, and has cast her sinners out of her.

PSALM CXLVI.

- 1 PRAISE ye Jehovah ;
O my soul, praise thou Jehovah.
- 2 I will praise Jehovah while I live,
I will chant Elohim while I have my being.

- 3 O trust ye not in princes, in the child of man,
In whom there is no salvation.ⁿ
- 4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth ;
On that day all his devices^o perish.
- 5 Blessed is he that hath the Elohim of Jacob for his help,
Whose hope is in Jehovah his Elohim ;
- 6 The Maker of the heavens and the earth,
The sea and all that in them is :
- 7 Who keepeth his promise for ever.
- He executeth judgment for the oppressed,
He giveth food to the hungry.
- 8 Jehovah releaseth the prisoners,
Jehovah openeth ' the eyes ' of the blind ;^p
- Jehovah lifteth up them that were bowed down,
- 9 Jehovah loveth the righteous,^q
Jehovah preserveth the strangers ;
- He will afford a refuge for the fatherless and widow,
And he will overturn the way of the wicked.
- 10 Jehovah is king for ever,
Thy Elohim, O Zion, from age to age.

ⁿ "Whose help is a very nothing."

^o "Rather, ' his false deceitful show : ' literally, ' his glitter.' " HORSLEY.

^p "Giveth quick sight to." Idem.

^q Perhaps, "Felt earnest desire in regard to those that were rigorously treated."

EXPOSITION.

We have the consent of many of the Jewish writers that this Psalm belongs to the days of the Messiah: indeed the last verse, which celebrates the eternal reign of the King of Zion, must of necessity be referred to the period when the Son of God shall come in his kingdom, and not to that era, when Zion was to behold her King, "meek and lowly, sitting upon an ass, even a colt the foal of an ass."

The distinctive subject interwoven with the general

theme in this Psalm, is, that Zion, now to become the city of the great King and the joy of the whole earth, is not to trust for her restoration, and for the preservation of the spared remnants of mankind, to princes, nor in any human aid for her deliverance, but to her mighty Maker alone.

He is celebrated as her deliverer: for here, as in the other Psalms, the people of God are "the oppressed," "the hungry," "the prisoners," "those that are bowed down," "the righteous," or "justified, in the sight of God," but "strangers" upon earth. Zion and her children are the "fatherless and the widow." And the wicked overthrown before the King of Zion, are the enemies of the church in the last days.

PSALM CXLVII.

Praise ye Jah.

- 1 TRULY sweet is the chant unto Elohim;
Truly his praise is delightful.
- 2 Jehovah buildeth up Jerusalem,
He gathereth the outcasts of Israel.
- 3 He healeth the broken-hearted,
And bindeth up their wounds.
- 4 It is he that determineth the number^r of the stars,
And hath assigned unto each its name.
- 5 Great is our Lord, and great is his power,
His understanding is infinite.
- 6 Jehovah careth for the meek,
He humbleth the wicked unto the earth.

^r "He hath set a number—allotted number." HORSLEY.

- 7 Sing unto Jehovah a responsive psalm,
Chant ye to our Elohim upon the harp ;
- 8 Who covereth the heavens with clouds,
Who prepareth rain for the earth,
Who causeth the grass to grow upon the hills ;
- 9 Giving food to the cattle,
To the young ravens when they call upon him.
- 10 He regardeth not the strength of a horse,
Neither taketh he pleasure in the limbs of a man.
- 11 The pleasure of Jehovah is in them that fear him,
In them that hope in his tender love.
- 12 O Jerusalem, laud Jehovah ;
Praise thy Elohim, O Zion.
- 13 For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates,
Hath blessed thy children within thee.
- 14 He hath fixed prosperity in thy borders,
Hath filled thee with the flour of wheat.
- 15 He hath sent forth his command upon the earth,
His word is moving swiftly ;
- 16 He giveth snow like wool,
He scattereth the rime like ashes ;
- 17 He sendeth forth his frost as binding chains ;^{*}
Who can stand before his cold ?
- 18 He sendeth forth his word and melteth them ;
He turneth his wind, and the waters flow :

^{*} " Alb. Schultensius ad Prov. xx.
4, et Hiob. xxxviii. 30, כפתים *vin-*
cula constringentia, vertil, a rad. כפת

כפת *ligavit, constrinxit.*" Sm. Lex.
Heb.

- 19 He hath declared his word unto Jacob,
His statutes and ordinances unto Israel.
- 20 He dealt not thus with any nation,
Neither had the heathen knowledge of his judgments.

Praise ye Jah.

EXPOSITION.

Many later expositors seem satisfied with considering this Psalm as a song of praise for the restoration from the Babylonian captivity. Bishop Horsley entitles it, "A Thanksgiving of the returned Captives, perhaps composed for a Pentecost, or Feast of Trumpets, after the Restoration." It appears, however, that the Jewish writers themselves were not satisfied with this exposition. Agreeably with the analogy of that interpretation which I have adopted, "Eben Ezra and other Jewish writers think that it foretells the future rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the restoration of the Jews from their present captivity, and refer it to the times of the Messiah."^t

The subject of the Psalm is in some respects similar to the last. It declares that the Deliverer of Israel is not a human prince or child of man; but the great God that marshalleth the stars upon the ethereal plain, and ordereth the courses of the revolving seasons, "the clouds' director, whom winds and seas obey."

The Psalm is divided into three parts, at the 7th and 12th verses. These verses with the first verse, are so many introductions to their respective parts. And the Psalm is, as is intimated in the 7th verse, of the responsive kind, sung in alternate parts. These alternate parts are easily distinguished, as one of the parties that maintain the dialogue, speaks of God's mercies to Israel: the other, of his providential rule over the elements.

^t Dr. Gill.

Thus, in part the first, the first voice, or semi-chorus, celebrates the building of Jerusalem, and the relief afforded to the broken-hearted outcasts of Israel. The second voice replies, That it is "he that numbereth the stars; so great is the power, so infinite the understanding of Israel's God." The first voice again replies, That he hath taken care of his meek afflicted people, and humbled their proud enemies; anticipating, as is usual with the prophetic Spirit in these Psalms, the "battle of the great day of Almighty God."

After the introduction, in the second part, the second party celebrates the overruling providence of God in preparing rain for the earth, and supplying food for the beasts of the earth, and for the birds of the air. The first party resumes in the 10th and 11th verses, and points out the hand of that same God, the Lord of providence, in what had happened in the late overthrow of Antichrist, and the deliverance of God's believing people: "The horse and the rider had been thrown into a deep sleep." The horse and his rider, and all the mighty apparatus of war, had been despised by him, and the depressed and humble objects of his care had been made victorious.

This little trait of the final conflict, "the horse and his rider," is remarkably identified by parallel prophecies. "And they," "the flock of the Lord of Hosts whom he has visited," "shall be as mighty men that tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight because the Lord is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded."^u "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness."^x

In the third introduction, verse 12th, Jerusalem and Zion are exhorted to praise their great Deliverer. The

^u Zech. x. 5.

^x Zech. xii. 3, 4.

first voice describes their prosperity, after the destruction of their adversaries. The second voice again informs us, It is the same hand that directs the storm and changes the seasons, that hath wrought this deliverance. The Psalm concludes with a particular acknowledgment of the mercies of Israel; that to them alone had been committed the oracles of God, which now illumine all the world.

PSALM CXLVIII.

Praise ye Jah.

- 1 PRAISE ye Jehovah from the heavens,
Praise him in the heights :
- 2 Praise him, all ye his angels ;
Praise him, all his hosts ;
- 3 Praise him, sun and moon,
Praise him, all stars of light ;
- 4 Praise him, O heaven of heavens,^y
And ye waters that are above the heavens.
- 5 Let them praise the name of Jehovah,
For he commanded, and they were created.
- 6 And he hath fixed them for ever,
He gave them a decree that cannot be broken.
- 7 Praise ye Jehovah from the earth,
Monsters and all deeps ;

^y The "heaven of heavens," from the connexion, evidently means the surrounding atmosphere. By the waters above the expanse or firmament, here and in Genesis, we may understand the clouds and vapours, suspended in the air; or we may apply to the solution of the meaning

of these terms, the recent discoveries of chemistry, understanding them of the gaseous fluids which mount still higher than our atmosphere; for water itself is known to be composed of two of these gases, in combination with each other.

- 8 Fire and hail, snow and vapour,
Stormy wind, fulfilling his word :
- 9 Hills and all mountain tops,
Fruitful trees and all cedars,
- 10 Beasts and all cattle,
Reptiles and winged birds ;
- 11 Kings of the earth and all nations,
Princes and all leaders of the earth :
- 12 Young men, and virgins also,
Old men and children.
- 13 Let them praise the name of Jehovah,
For his name only is exalted,
His praise is above heaven and earth.
- 14 He hath raised up a horn for his people,
The praise of all his beloved,^a
For the children of Israel, his favoured people.^a

Praise ye Jah.

^a Objects of His loving-kindness.

^a Or the people who are permitted to approach near to him.

EXPOSITION.

We cannot doubt respecting the epocha which this universal song of praise anticipates, since it is distinctly marked at the close of the Psalm. God has raised up a horn of salvation, in the house of Israel ; the praise of all the objects of his tender love. The times of refreshing are come from the presence of the Lord. And he sends Jesus Christ, which was before preached unto them ; whom the heavens have now received until the times of restitution of all things.^b

It is at an era, too, when the name of Jehovah alone is

^b Acts, iii. 19, &c.

exalted over all the earth. As Isaiah was instructed to say: "The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly destroy. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth."^c

All creatures in heaven and in earth are called to celebrate this glorious event; "for he cometh to judge the earth:" not only intelligent men of all ranks, but all creatures animate and inanimate, in heaven and in earth. And the Apostle Paul has taught us, the interest that all created nature feels, or seems to feel, in the expectation of these glorious times. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God, &c." Nature is now represented as groaning and travailing in pain, in longing expectation of this event—"the glory that is to be brought to us at the coming of Christ."

No wonder, then, that in congratulation of this event, the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, should be represented as bursting forth in loud songs of praise. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."^d

^c Chap. ii. 17, &c.

^d Rev. v. 11, &c.

PSALM CXLIX.

Praise ye Jah.

- 1 SING to Jehovah a new song,
His praises in the congregation of his beloved.
- 2 Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him,
Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.
- 3 Praise his name in the choir,^e
Chant to him with tabret and harp ;
- 4 For Jehovah is propitious to his people,
And adorneth the meek with salvation.
- 5 His beloved exult with glory,
They sing triumphantly on their couches.
- 6 "The exaltation of El," is on their lips,^f
And a two-edged sword in their hands,
- 7 To execute vengeance on the nations,
Chastisements on the peoples ;
- 8 To bind their kings in chains,
Their honourable men in fetters of iron ;
- 9 To execute on them the judgment written.
This honour is for all his beloved.

Praise ye Jah.

^e מְרוֹחַל Many translators render this word a pipe or lute : it is certainly either the name of some particular wind instrument, or of the choir in general, playing upon their instruments with much gesticulation and a measured motion of the feet perhaps ; but an idea of which is

very ill conveyed, indeed, by an allusion to the *dances* of the moderns.

^f That is, "is the theme of their discourse." The original is בְּגֵרוֹנָם in their throats. It is probable the Hebrew, when a living language, was extremely *guttural*, as the Arabian language now is.

EXPOSITION.

Some of the Jewish rabbin acknowledge this Psalm to belong to the times of the Messiah. And to that era alone can it with the least degree of propriety be referred ; not, indeed, to the period and transactions of his first coming ; that called for other strains from the harp of Zion ; but, according to the general tenour of these sacred songs, to the anticipated triumph of Christ and his saints over all the powers of the adversary in the last days.

The prediction particularly prominent in this prophecy is, that all the objects of grace or of the tender love of God are to be sharers with their great Redeemer, when he comes to take vengeance on the apostate and Antichristian nations, and to judge the world in righteousness : “ This honour have all his beloved.” And we find a clear intimation of this in many of the Scripture prophecies.

In remotest ages, “ Enoch, the seventh from Adam,” had been inspired to proclaim to the ancient church : “ Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly decds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”^e So Zechariah was commissioned to say, when speaking of this last time, and of the judgment so often written, “ And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.” In Daniel also it is said, not only, that “ one like the Son of Man” is to receive the last kingdom upon earth ; but also, that “ the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.”^h

At the close of the Old Testament we have a prediction to a similar effect, and one which clearly forebodes the final triumph of the godly on this present earth. To those on whom “ the sun of righteousness arises, with healing in his

^e Jude, 14, 15.

^h Chap. vii. ver. 27.

wings," it is said, "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of Hosts."

In the New Testament, also, this event is as clearly foretold as in the Old: "We shall judge the world"—"the saints shall judge angels"—"and he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I have received of my Father."ⁱ "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne."^k

These passages clearly predict to the saints, and to all of them, a participation in the glories of the reign of Christ upon earth. The ancient throne, we should recollect, was a large area, where the Prince and all his honoured ministers sat together, such as is used at this day by the eastern monarchs, and called a *DIVAN*. To a throne of this description the Psalm before us alludes, when it speaks of "the beloved" of the Father, "singing triumphantly on their couches."

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns: and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself: and he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called, the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh written, King of kings and Lord of lords." Again in the xxth chapter we have a description of those who had overcome by faith, and were

ⁱ Rev. ii. 26, 27.

^k Rev. iii. 21.

to sit down with Christ on his throne ; “ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and the judgment was given unto them : and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands : and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years”—“ Priests of God and of the Lamb.”

I have only further to remark, that it is evident from a comparison of chap. xiii. 8, that this description applies not to martyrs alone, and to some particular sufferers in the cause of truth ; but to **ALL THE ELECT** of God—to all that overcome the world by faith. For in the passage now referred to, where the same corruptions of the faith, and the apostacy from the religion of Jesus, are represented, as worshipping the symbolical beast, &c. we are told, “ that all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

Again, that the happy partakers of the first resurrection include all the redeemed people of the Lord, in all the different ages of the world, is plain from the account which St. Paul gives of the “ coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together to him : ” “ But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others that have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall first rise : then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air ; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”¹ This is the last trump, to which

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 13, &c. Compare also 2 Thess. i. 7—10. 1 John, iii. 1. 2.

the same Apostle in another place refers, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." The allusion is not here to the symbolical trumpets of the Revelation, but to the silver trumpets of the Tabernacle, which so often called together the congregation of Israel. The Archangel's trump for the last time summons the Redeemed of the Lord, and this "gathering to Him" is final; "so shall we ever be with the Lord."

To no lower subject ought these Psalms to be referred, than to the anticipation of this great day, when "the children of the resurrection" shall be counted worthy to "stand before the Son of Man;" and all the world congratulate "the manifestation of the sons of God."

PSALM CL.

Praise ye Jah.

- 1 PRAISE El in his holy place,
Praise him in the firmament of his strength ;^m
- 2 Praise him according to his mighty deeds,
Praise him according to his great power ;
- 3 Praise him with the sound of trumpet,
Praise him with lute and harp ;
- 4 Praise him with tabret and choir,ⁿ
Praise him with stringed instruments and lutes ;
Praise him upon the loud cymbals,
Praise him upon the high-sounding^o cymbals.
- 5 Let every thing that hath breath praise Jah.

Praise ye Jah.

^m That is, "the firmament of heaven which his might has spread forth." Comp. Psalm xix. 1.

ⁿ Or, "choral song."
^o Or, "tinkling."

EXPOSITION.

It will be sufficient to refer this animated invocation to all the powers of music, and to the articulating breath of all creatures, to the same event as the former Psalms. The eternal work of praise will then succeed to the triumphs anticipated in those sacred songs. “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come and worship before me, saith the Lord.”—“And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia! salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornications, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hands. And again they said, Alleluia! and her smoke arose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen, Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many thunders, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”^p

^p Revelation, xix. 1.

APPENDIX.

As this Volume contains all the other works extant of David, the author certainly of the greater part of the Psalms, perhaps I shall be excused if I subjoin his Elegy on the Death of Saul and Jonathan, which, though not a religious poem, yet, as a grateful tribute to friendship and public worth, and on account of its intrinsic beauty, may well claim a place among his other writings.

And David sang this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son : and he directed (it^a) to be taught to the children of Judah. Behold, it is inscribed in the book of Jasher, “ Antelope of Israel, slain on thy heights.”^b

אַחַח, how are the mighty fallen !

Tell it not in Gath,

Publish it not in the streets of Askelon ;

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,

Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.

O mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew,

And let there be no rain on you, nor fields of offerings :

For there have the shields of the mighty been cast away,

The shield of Saul, unanointed with oil.^c

^a We have a word here, in the received Hebrew text, for which we know no other meaning than “ a bow.” Michaelis and Geddes refer it to the measure ; but others, on the authority of the Septuagint, omit it.

^b This, I am persuaded, is no part of the Elegy, but its designation or title in the book of Jasher. The antelope, we shall remember, is the

emblem of beauty among the eastern nations : its heights, or the eminences it could mount with its nimble feet, were its retreats for safety. The antelope slain on its heights is therefore a meet symbol of the princes of Israel slain on their own mountains.

^c If our present text be right, and there seems no just cause to suspect it, משיח must be considered as an

From the blood of the slain, from the flesh of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not in vain.

Saul and Jonathan, they loved each other,
And pleasant were they together in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided.

They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

O daughters of Israel, weep for Saul ;
Who clothed you in scarlet with delicate attire,
Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel.

“ Ah, how are the mighty fallen ! ”¹

Jonathan was in the midst of the battle,
He was slain upon thy heights :

I am grieved for thee, my brother.
O Jonathan, thou wast my delight—

Wonderful was thy love to me,
More than the love of woman.

Ah, how are the mighty fallen !
And the weapons of war destroyed.

epithet of מַגֵּן and not of Saul ; and we must apply for its illustration the known circumstance that the shields of the ancient warriors were made of leather, which required frequent dressings with oil : “ Arise, ye princes,

anoint the shield.” But now, in the fields of Gilboa, the shield of Saul lies neglected.

¹ The women are here supposed, as in the Song of Moses, to sing in repetition the former part of the ode.

THE END.